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ABSTRACT

Relying on the conviction that, in the unrepresented and improverished section of our cities, involvement of parents in the education of their children is an essential step on the way to a better life in a fairer and more equal society, this study describes the achievements and limitations of this principle in action as discovered by an individual involved in a community school. The study contains four main sections: origins of community schools; the community school in the black ghetto; the need for a new philosophy of education; and conclusions and recommendations. The historic background of community schools is reviewed and their continued development traced. Parent involvement in the community school of the black ghetto, teaching practices and problems, and the problem of long-run stability are discussed. The prevailing American philosophy of education and the problems of social class and educational equality are related to a basic philosophy of education for Blacks today. The two features of this proposed philosophy are pride of origin and passion for equality. Twelve conclusions and recommendations for others involved in community schools conclude the study. (Author/KSM)

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COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

EDUCATION FOR CHANGE

DOREEN H. WILKINSON

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Education for Change

Doreen H. Wilkinson

November 1973

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PREFACE

Writing this report, using my own peculiar way of finding sources of information, could not have been done without a grant from the Braitmayer Foundation and the assistance of the National Association of Independent Schools.

In a sense this is a personal document, for my years at the Roxbury Community School changed and shaped my whole attitude toward education. I cannot thank enough all those who made me welcome, took hard-to-spare time, and candidly shared with me their frustrations, their concerns, and their rewards of administering a school where the community and professionals had to unlearn most of what has been laid down in the educational rule book.

There were some people with whom I spent many hours trying to get at real experiences we had shared. Without them I could not have put this report together. An unusual way of investigating: nonscientific, non-objective, my critics will say. But my sources were the people to whom it happened, not the observers and annotators. I am grateful to them.

There are all the people who, with me, helped to begin an educational experiment which broke with most traditional academic and sacred ideas, not so much out of rebellious conviction or radical ideas as out of a search for meaning and change in their own lives, something for their children which would differ from their own experiences: Mrs. Bobby Jean Thornton, a community organizer at the Roxbury Community School and a parent of three children who also attended that school; Mrs. Cecelia Washington, a master teacher at the Roxbury Community School and also a parent; Mrs. Ellen Field, a parent of the Roxbury Community School and one of its founders; Mrs. Lucille Davis, a fifth grade teacher and parent at the New School for Children; and Mr. William Smith, administrative assistant at the Roxbury Community School and also a student coordinator at Northeastern University.

To my husband, Dr. Robert H. Wilkinson, I owe thanks of a special kind. He offered constant criticism, advice, and support.

I also want to express appreciation to the many people who spent time talking with me about their involvement in the administration of community schools: James Breeden, William Davis, Ophie Franklin, Joyce Grant, Kenneth Haskins, Charles Lawrence, Bernice Miller, Luther Seabrook, and Arlene Young.

I gratefully acknowledge the suggestions and encouragement of people who have been connected with educational reform: Ruth Batson, Don Benders, Kay Brigham, Kenneth Clark, Nancy Curtis, Peter Dow, Lyn Dozier, Hans Guggenheim, Barbara Horne, Mel King, Peter Lenrow, Elma Lewis, Walter McCann, Nancy Manis, Jackie and Hollie Moultrie, Ellie Nickerson, Tim Parsons, Mel Sund, and Edward Yeomans.

I must express my deep appreciation to Roy Illsley, headmaster of Battling Brook Primary School, in Leicestershire, and John Mitchell, headmaster of Long Lee Primary School, in West Yorkshire, England, and their staffs, who spent considerable time trying to give me a feeling of what they were attempting to do.

I am also indebted to the Educational Development Center in Newton, Massachusetts, for providing me with facilities.

Finally, many of my ideas were reshaped and refined after extensive readings of the following thinkers, to whom every educator must be indebted: John Dewey, W. E. B. DuBois, Joseph Featherstone, Ira I. Goldenberg, William Grier and Price Cobbs, Robert Nisbet, Robert Redfield, Phillip Slater, and Maurice R. Stein.

D. H. W.

1. INTRODUCTION

This study was motivated by my conviction that, in the unrepresented and impoverished sections of our cities, involvement of parents in the education of their children is an essential step on the way to a better life for all in a fairer and more equal society. This conviction arose out of my own involvement for three years in a school which was committed to this belief. I wanted to study the achievements and limitations of this principle in action in existing community schools and to evaluate its applicability to the broader educational scene.

I visited schools, studied pertinent documents; most of all, I talked to many people who were concerned in one way or another with this aspect of education. Although my investigation was broad in scope, it concentrated on the community schools in Boston, since much of the genuine progress in this direction and the most tangible evidence of success is to be found in this city.

It is important for an investigator to realize that, in studying any school, the casual visit, the polite attention to the well-rehearsed presentation of the aims and claims of the school, the conducted tour, are not in themselves a complete picture of the situation. A more balanced view can only come from actual day-to-day involvement. Thus the descriptions and inferences contained in this report are often based on personal experience at the Roxbury Community School as it was reinforced or modified by my observations of other schools, the opinions of respected members of the teaching profession, and of those who live or work in the communities and schools involved. In order to obtain several points of view on visiting each school, I saw to it that I was accompanied by one or more people who were intimately familiar with inner-city life.

The schools I studied were mostly primary schools, catering to children of ages ranging from about five to ten or eleven years. Because it is in these years that intensive parent involvement is most practicable, and probably most meaningful, I have limited my study to this age range. There seems to be no instance of meaningful parental involvement being tried at the high school level; in fact, it seems unlikely that such a system would be successful unless preceded by a similar involvement in the lower grades.

Since English does not have personal pronouns devoid of sex connotation, I use "he," "him," and "his" for a male or female person, except where otherwise indicated, so as to avoid the endless repetition of the cumbersome phrase "he or she." Some descriptive terms which occur frequently in the discussion of schools need clarification. "Primary" denotes schools having kindergarten through fourth grade (approximately), the educational level dealt with exclusively in this report.

Classroom organization is frequently classified as "traditional," on the one hand, as compared with "innovative," "experimental," "free," "open," "like the Leicestershire schools," on the other. In general, the traditional

system involves an age-grouped class organized so that the same lesson is taught to all children at the same time, whereas the others are not necessarily bound by these constraints. Unfortunately, a great deal of emotionalism and subjectivity enters into the common use of these terms. They are most often used by those who believe that organization of a classroom, or lack of it, is the only significant factor in successful teaching. "Free" school advocates are often motivated, above all, by dislike of the traditional, and willingly draft all nontraditional systems onto their side. However, as Edward Yeomans has pointed out, a gulf of difference stretches between the completely unstructured school, which is referred to here as the "free school," and the so-called "integrated day" school, which has a much more complex structure than the traditional school in that it permits many degrees of freedom within a carefully planned process.[1] The integrated day is perhaps best typified at present by some of the schools of Leicestershire and the West Riding of Yorkshire, in England.

Over a period of fifty years, John Dewey urged upon American educators the same basic point, in vain. He had much to say that was critical of the traditional schools of his day, but he was hardly less pleased by the "free" schools which were opened in the earlier part of this century in reaction to traditional methods (often as a direct consequence of his teachings by people calling themselves his disciples). He castigated those who held

> that logical order is so foreign to the natural operations of the mind that it is of slight importance in education, at least in that of the young, and that the main thing is just to give free play to impulses and desires without regard to any definitely intellectual growth. Hence the mottoes of this school are "freedom," "self-expression," "individuality," "spontaneity," "play," "interest," "natural unfolding," and so on. In its emphasis upon individual attitude and activity, it sets slight store upon organized subject matter. It conceives method to consist of various devices for stimulating and evoking, in their natural order of growth, the native potentialities of individuals.[2]

The methods of the new Leicestershire schools seem to descend more directly from Dewey, philosophically speaking, than the so-called innovative schools of present-day America. They are not new in principle, and are, in fact, very logical developments. A thoughtful teacher, given the necessary freedom may very well arrive at similar methods independently. However, it cannot be emphasized too strongly that these schools are fundamentally different from the unstructured free-play environment, in which both children and teachers are free--free of unpleasant duties, overtaxed intellects, and burdensome responsibilities. In the "integrated day," children have freedom within flexible limits. Responsibility lies heavily on teachers to see that each child--each child--acquires basic skills as well as a breadth and depth of mind in keeping with his abilities and personality. The work of the teacher is long and onerous, and requires considerable skill of a sort not yet taught in teacher-training schools. Teachers in the Leicestershire schools talk of ten- and twelve-hour days.

Another term which causes much confusion is "community." By definition, it refers to a group of people living in the same area and having a sense of something in common. In practice, it can refer to a country or a city block. Thus, when a large subsection of New York City demands "community control," it seeks the same kind of control which already belongs to the citizens of most suburban communities, and is the normal method of school control in this country. The system fails to be true community control when two or more disparate communities are grouped together politically, with control belonging only to one of them. Much of the discontent giving rise to the schools I report on here is the direct result of this kind of unrepresented enclave in the cities of America.

When the term "community" is used in connection with a single school, the region envisioned is usually a smaller one. In fact, the way a school conceives of the community it serves is a vital distinguishing characteristic. In Boston, for example, the community served by one school may be the entire Roxbury-North Dorchester area, or even the metropolitan area, whereas another may serve a few blocks around the school. In the latter case, it might more correctly be called a "neighborhood school," but in the home of Hicks and Eisenstadt, this term has political connotations which make its use repellent for a predominantly black school, for in the United States the neighborhood school has been the traditional and highly effective method of enforcing segregation of the races and separation of the classes in the Northern cities and their suburbs, by capitalizing on the segregated patterns of housing.

In the sense of the discussion so far, a community is something that exists, something that has been forged out of the workings of social, economic and political forces. In another sense, it refers to a group of people who come together for a common purpose and found a community in a place of their own choosing where none existed before. Harmony, New Harmony, Fruitlands, and Oneida are some of the better-known communities founded in the nineteenth century in this country, and in each the role of education was given great prominence. Such short-lived utopias would seem to have little relevance to the problems of today. But "community schools" based on utopian or simplistic views of life arise with some frequency nowadays, although the center of gravity of utopia has shifted farther to the West.

There are many such schools, not always community schools, but always describing themselves as "new," "innovative," "experimental," "free," often claiming to have found the key to problems of education which have escaped the rest of the world. These schools, which have been studied to see if they offer any useful solutions to the chronic educational problems of inner-city dwellers, generally seem to be far removed from the reality of urban life. They are universally the product of the upper middle-class white American, whose values are visible in the schools they generate. Few of the founding participants are poor or black.

Characteristic of the founders of such schools are elements of romanticism, escapism, antitechnological bias, and a desire to be free of restraints. In fact, the overriding purpose of most of these schools seems to be the therapeutic value they hold for the adult participants

in giving freedom to kick over the traces, indulge in an emotional binge, and relieve tensions. Indeed, they seem hardly the most kindly environment for small children. In the New Schools Exchange Newsletter of October 9, 1969, was following note, indicating that some of the advocates of these schools do have saner moments:

> From a reader: Some flashes on the Summerhill Conference, last month in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Several disturbing notes:
>
> One: Many of the people there seemed more into creating shelters against reality than in encouraging their kids to experience the world outside the cloister.
>
> Two: A lot of the people there--doing "free schools:--were themselves very unfree and hung-up about sex, drugs, race and relating in a spontaneous, non-structured way.
>
> Three: The Summerhill Society (as represented at the conference) seemed to consist of very middle class people involved in creating more privileges for their kids.

The brochures put out by some of these schools reveal a great deal about the views and state of mind of the sponsors; unfortunately much less is revealed about the quality or true nature of the education received by the children. Nonesuch Farm in California is an example of the romantic, escapist type catering to the eleven- to fifteen-year-old trade. We are told that "Nonesuch Farm is actually brown, green, blue, grey and occasionally, red at sunset. . . . Our books are more likely to deal with organic gardening than algebra." The curriculum excludes anything remotely modern or scientific, but does include such pastoral skills as fishing, goat-milking, and riding Clementine.

Pinel is "a small non-graded school," also in California, whose nature, we are told, is ecological:

> The concept of ecology was applied successfully in the life sciences and subsequently transferred to other scholarly and scientific disciplines. As a result, much has been said about "wholeness," "functional integration," "organic unity," and so on. What the ecological approach attempts to do is to put the splintered pieces of reality back together again. And this is just what needs to be done in education.

The Bear Wallow School-Community, also in California, "is composed basically of retreatists who believe the social, economic, political, and environmental shit will soon hit the fan. We are preparing a refuge at Bear Wallow--the theme of Bear Wallow School will be to prepare its students (and teachers) for a new way of life than normally found in the cities, suburbs or rural farm communities. We will try to preserve certain skills and crafts that are becoming 'obsolete' in today's spoon-fed society. Survival and development of the individual will be a main interest of the school."

2. THE ORIGINS OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

The rise in the 1960's of black-run community schools can only be understood in the light of previous decades. The United States in the early twentieth century saw itself as a great melting pot of diverse races and cultures in which Jew and Gentile, Irishman and Yankee, though they might not always work and live together, at least moved and competed in the same system, even if not as equal starters. But it was unequivocally a white system. Except when demands for cheap farm and domestic labor dictated otherwise, a policy of essentially white-only immigration was followed--as it still is. Few new black citizens were arriving, and the former slaves and their descendants were literally treated as a separate and subordinate subsystem, not as part of the mainstream of American life, with its many material advantages. There were few voices speaking for the black man; DuBois and the NAACP preached to empty pews. Moreover, blacks were systematically denied the basic human rights, and the elementary freedoms enjoyed by the most recent immigrant.

The Roosevelt New Deal era, followed by wartime prosperity, created the opportunity and ethos in which black people could begin to act as a group to demand their rights as citizens and seek the personal freedom promised to all. Gunnar Myrdal commented in 1944 on the state of Negro education in the North:

> The deleted passage describes the inequity for Negroes between ideals instilled in school and realities outside of school(footnote 3) and is omitted for copyright reasons.

From that time forward, the black man was never out of sight or earshot of the white majority. The cause of black justice was carried forward on a rising tide of righteous indignation. The struggle soon began to achieve

There is great variety among these and other such schools, and some are no doubt performing an adequate service for the class of children they serve. However, their settings and goals are so vastly different from those of the ghetto school that there seems to be little of value to be learned from them. In any case, genuine achievement is difficult to measure. The typical idealist who operates these schools can always find success, even in the most abject failure. In any case, they certainly are not intended to attack the evils of a social system which denies to a whole race of children the education which is rightfully theirs.

An even more serious problem is tackled by the Indian community schools. While the difficulties of Indians are in many respects quite different from those of the urban ghetto, they, like black people, have been systematically denied a decent education.

The Indians, scattered remnants of many nations with differing cultures and languages, are under tremendous pressure to reject their native tongues and cultures, a pressure intensified by the fact that, in many cases, written forms of their languages do not exist.

The problems of the Indian are different in so many ways from those of the black man that comparisons are scarcely possible, and a common effort is not practical at this stage. However, in view of the facts that Indians and blacks suffer the same injustices and share a common enemy, mutual aid in areas such as education is certainly worthy of future consideration.

a victory here and there. Professional sports were integrated, starting with baseball in 1947 (although it is significant, for this study, that another decade would pass before black feet would wear the Red Sox of Boston). The armed forces were nominally integrated in 1948, and little by little the United States moved from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century in race relations. Considerable work was done to force implementation of the then current "separate but equal" doctrine by causing Southern school systems to spend more money on black schools.

Then, the attack on racial segregation as a legal principle achieved success in the school decision of the Supreme Court in 1954, which struck down segregated education. This ruling gave tremendous impetus to the whole integration movement. Whites began to work with blacks in increasing, though always small, numbers in various forms of legal and direct action directed against segregation.

The direct effect of the 1954 ruling was felt at first only in the South, where the cause was aided by the white Northerner, whose active support, or more often his benevolent indifference, was spurred less by his love for the black race than by his traditional contempt for the South. But while school desegregation was being pressed in the South, segregation was actually increasing in the cities of the North. As blacks moved into the central cities and the whites moved further out, the word "ghetto" took on a new meaning.

Although segregation in the North was not the result of legislative act, but rather the direct consequence of enforced segregation in housing, the courts accorded equal validity to de jure and de facto educational segregation. Predictably, however, the enthusiasm of the white Northerner for racial integration waned in direct proportion to its closeness to his own doorstep, and in many instances school integration in Northern cities turned out to be more difficult to achieve than in the South.

The core of Northern resistance to integration lay in the peculiarly American system of autonomous local control of the schools, and, within each local system, the concept of the "neighborhood school." The decentralized system of school control has been the principal mechanism in the United States whereby the characteristic American class system, based mainly on wealth, and more recently also on the possession of a university degree, has been sustained and nurtured and by which the separation of the races has been maintained without the need for any legislation specifically referring to race.

Under this system, each legally constituted community has virtually absolute control of its schools. It can lavish money on them, or it can render them ineffective through sheer starvation, even closing them down in some cases. The size of these local entities is based not on rational division of authority but on historical circumstance. In one place, a population of 1,000,000 people may be subject to a single school authority,

while a nearby town of 2,500 people may have equal autonomy. The funds available to these two bodies, quite unrelated to need, depend entirely on the resources of each community.

The pattern is not entirely arbitrary, however; the rich and influential can harness the tides of change. The well-to-do residents of a central city, businessmen, and self-employed professional men, can select the suburb of their choice, and by moving there in sufficient numbers effectively set it aside as their own special preserve. This process is not a carefully planned scheme, but one which naturally follows from the exclusiveness of American society and the way power is exercised by those who have means, without the restraint of any prevailing moral philosophy of social equality or the planning of any central government. Under its sway, hamlets rapidly grow into small towns, each having a homogeneous character chosen for it by a sort of economic determinism.

When the rich and the better-off move out of the central city, a chain reaction is set in motion, with the end result that the poorest sections of the city, in terms of housing, public services, and so on, become available to poor migrants from rural areas, or from the territorial dependencies such as Puerto Rico, who seek the advantages of the city. By the late 1960's, this process had in many Northern cities resulted in a completely polarized system of geographically separated races and classes. The poor and black were largely powerless politically and economically, so, of course, they received little consideration from a controlling group that was firmly committed to laissez faire.

The system of local school autonomy thus ensures that the rich do not have to contribute to the education or the subsistence of the poor, nor do their children have to come into contact with more than a modicum of children of other backgrounds, religions, or races. The devilish genius of it is that it accomplishes its goals within the specious framework of "freedom of choice" and "decentralization," and so the fight to eliminate segregated education is much more difficult to win in the North.

Given the will to break the pattern of segregation, the schools are the logical place to start. Housing patterns are not easily altered, nor are employment patterns; but school districts can be changed at the stroke of a pen, and busing children to school is a small price to pay for a major social advance. Busing is a principle firmly accepted by the rich, who habitually transport their own children to private schools generally free of those unable to bear the cost. In many Northern cities, however, this elementary step is not possible, for one simple but all-powerful reason; the white majority choose not to take it.

In the mid-1960's, the latent racism of the Northerner emerged. Indifference turned to opposition, and the bigot joined forces with the quondam liberal under the banners of freedom and individual rights to defend the holy ground of the "neighborhood school." In Boston, the fight against school integration was led by Mrs. Louise Day Hicks, one-time chairman of the Boston school committee, who achieved national renown through her stand. Her successor, Thomas Eisenstadt, found a path to personal advancement in his antibusing resolution. This policy, instituted by the school committee at a time when it had become obvious that busing was the

only practical road to school integration, prohibited all additional busing, thereby preventing the implementation of integration. It did not prohibit the extensive amount of busing already in progress--as a matter of expediency for the school administration. This kind of policy was extremely popular among Boston whites, and, as it turned out, popular all over the country. President Nixon has clearly stated that he supports this view. There is strong indication that the Congress will enact legislation to this effect, all the while protesting belief in integration with the sincerity of the man who says he is a friend of the fish but merely objects to their use of the water. It is likely that, by the time President Nixon has reconstructed the Supreme Court, racial segregation will be reinstated in American society.

When it became clear in the mid-1960's that, unlike its Southern counterpart, the Northern schoolhouse door was virtually impregnable, the integration movement stumbled. Newer, younger, and angrier black leaders, familiar with the preachings of the Muslims and Malcolm X, began to turn to other paths. The new approach was to attempt to create among black people in the ghettos a sense of common purpose, a feeling of pride in themselves, in their racial heritage, and the community in which they lived, a sense of outrage at the injustices heaped on the black people of America and the spirit of brotherhood needed for concerted action to right them. Whether this path of greater self-determination and "black power" is capable of achieving its goals remains to be seen, but there is no doubt that its immediate effect has been to create within the black ghettos a new sense of pride, of urgency and hope, and initially, at least, it has generated a new flow of money into the ghettos.

Education had to be a key part of this new movement. It would be necessary to bring up black children as the proud inheritors of a national or racial culture, just as all other peoples have done. The sanctified position given to George Washington in the education of young Americans is justified, not by the importance in the history of the world of what he did, but because he was an American who did it for America. He is first and foremost a symbol of national and racial pride to the white American, like Wellington to the British, or Lenin to the Russians. But he was also the first president of a nation in which one fifth of the people were slaves to the other four fifths. In the absence of any meaningful integration of the races at this point in time it is not only illogical but offensive to foist Washington off as an inspiration to black children, some of whom are no doubt direct descendants of slaves on his plantation.

How much more consistent it would be if, when the white child is taught about the Declaration of Independence, written in 1776 by slaveholders and slavetraders, the black child should hear of the petition of the blacks of Massachusetts in 1777 to the House of Representatives:

> The petition of a great number of blacks detained in a state of slavery in the bowels of a free and Christian country humbly shows that your petitioners apprehend that they have in common with all other men a natural and unalienable right to that freedom which the Great Parent of the universe has bestowed equally on all mankind and which they have never forfeited

> by any compact or agreement whatever. But they were unjustly dragged by the hand of cruel power from their dearest friends and some of them even torn from the embraces of their tender parents, from a populous, pleasant, and plentiful country and violation of laws of nature and of nations and in defiance of all the tender feelings of humanity, brought here either to be sold like beasts of burden and, like them, condemned to slavery for life--among a people professing the mild religion of Jesus.[4]

When white children learn of George Washington, let black children hear of Peter Salem, who fought in the battles of Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill; when white children learn of the campaigns against the British, let black children hear how both sides sought ways to free the slaves on condition that they fight in their armies; when white children learn of Jefferson the slaveholder, let black children hear of Quok Walker, whose case was the instrument by which slavery was declared unconstitutional in Massachusetts in 1783.[5]

So long as segregation exists, let black children be given their own history, from their own point of view. Let them see the War of Independence and the Civil War from the point of view of the slaves; let them know that, by winning the War of Independence, the American slaveowners in all likelihood gained an extra thirty years of slave labor, since Britain abolished slavery in 1833, the United States not until 1863.

Let them also hear of Frederick Douglass, of Booker T. and W. E. B. and other black men of note, and of the circumstances of their fame. Let them know of Paul Robeson; of Emmett Till, Medgar Evers, and the other martyrs. It is part of their history. It is necessary that black children, like all children, receive as part of their education something of substance to justify their lives, to give them pride in themselves, their families, their neighborhood, and their race.

It would be a great mistake to see the new approach to the education of black children as a complete volte-face. The merits of the different paths open to black people have been the subject of continuous debate among them ever since emancipation. The running dispute between Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. DuBois is evidence of this. Myrdal had this to say in 1944:

> Concerning the content of teaching in other respects, Negroes are also divided. On the one hand, they are inclined to feel that the Northern system, where a standardized teaching is given students independent of whether they are whites or Negroes, is the only right thing. On the other hand, they feel that the students get to know too little about Negro problems. They thus want an adjustment of teaching toward the status of Negroes, usually not in order to make the Negroes weak and otherwise fit into the white man's wishful picture about "good niggers" but, on the contrary, to make Negroes better prepared to fight for their rights. They feel that education should not only be accepted passively but

> should be used as a tool of concerted action to gain the equal status they are seeking. For this reason many, if not most, Negro leaders desire that Negro students should get special training in Negro problems.[6]

Myrdal goes on to quote an earlier work of DuBois on this subject:

> . . . theoretically, the Negro needs neither segregated schools nor mixed schools. What he needs is Education. What he must remember is that there is no magic, either in mixed schools or in segregated schools. A mixed school with poor and unsympathetic teachers, with hostile opinion, and no teaching concerning black folk, is bad. A segregated school with ignorant placeholders, inadequate equipment, poor salaries, and wretched housing, is equally bad. Other things being equal, the mixed school is the broader, more natural basis for the education of all youth. It gives wider contacts; it inspires greater self-confidence; and suppresses the inferiority complex. But other things seldom are equal, and in that case, Sympathy, Knowledge, and the Truth, outweigh all that the mixed school can offer.[7]

The new approach puts great emphasis on the idea that black people should form a cohesive group, working together in the ghetto where they now live to make it a more habitable and self-sustaining community. Schools in the ghetto are expected to teach children in ways appropriate to their culture and background, accepting them for what they are, and to lead them toward the fulfillment of their aspirations and the best possible use of their capabilities.

This new approach was greeted in the white suburbs with an enthusiasm never displayed for integration. It is, after all, in the direct American tradition of self-reliance, number one in the American Creed, and, incidentally, it reduces the pressure for blacks to move to the suburbs.

It is important to emphasize that this new outlook by the Northern black man is not to be seen as a direct counterpart of white racism; it is constructive rather than obstructive, the natural response to events of the past. When one path leads to an impenetrable wall, it is common sense, not bigotry, to try another; frank acceptance of the racial and cultural features which distinguish one race from another is not racism.

Each people needs its own spiritual resources. In the case of a group emerging from centuries of bondage and subjection, they need to rediscover lost roots and repair the broken lines of communication with their kindred. This does not mean that the black people of the United States reject their rightful place as citizens; they simply demand it on equal terms, in their own right as Afro-Americans, not as mere appendages to white civilization. Neither is it a veiw which rejects integrated education, although it certainly does not require it. The words of Dr. DuBois above probably represent quite closely the majority opinion among Northern blacks today.

The new directions taken by the black communities are quite clearly in the American tradition of decentralized control. In many Northern cities, the people of the ghetto have no voice in the control of the schools. Black representation on the school committees is small or non-existent. The disadvantages of being a minority are often augmented by such devices as gerrymandering, at-large elections, increasing the size of constituencies, or using complicated ballots. Many of these devices have been introduced by "reform" organizations as a means of disenfranchising certain groups, usually the poor, whom they consider likely to vote for "dishonest" candidates.

The demand of most black groups has been merely that the principle of community control be applied to these homogeneous geographic enclaves, according to generally accepted custom. Opposition is strong, though probably less than to integration. Racism remains a factor along with the universal element that those having power are reluctant to relinquish even a portion of it. A great practical difficulty is money. Control, in its most basic form, means control over money, and for a poor community to have a good school system, money must be made available from outside. Although some progress has been made over the years, America is far from committed to a belief in equality, and state or federal money is very difficult to get in amounts sufficient to the task, even if control is granted. Too many influential Americans still believe in the iron laws of nineteenth-century liberalism.

Community Schools Arise

By the mid-1960's, concerned black people were less worried about the failure to integrate city schools than about the immediate problem of the quality of education being dispensed to their children. The education in ghetto schools simply was not up to the expectations of black parents. On every hand there were complaints that the children were not being taught to read. The curriculum had little to do with the life and circumstances of the black child, and the boredom and lack of interest which naturally resulted was in turn responsible for a poor attitude to learning and a tendency to disruption. There were allegations of racist bias on the part of white teachers. In some cases there was unmitigated overt racism on the part of teachers and school officials, and in many other cases the cultural and ethnic differences between white teacher and black child gave rise to conflicts in which the child was the inevitable loser.

The situation became so extreme that in some places small independent schools have been started within the ghetto to provide a more palatable alternative to the public schools. They go under the general name of "community schools" in recognition of the fact that they attempt to cater to the educational needs of the community around them. There has been no system in their creation; each has been a unique event. They are few in number, not at all significant in terms of the proportion of ghetto children they serve. Their interest to the student of education lies in the insight they give into the process and practice of education in the ghetto, as it might be.

Since each school is different, there seems to be no better way to begin than by describing each school and how it came to be. In spite of their recent origin, the circumstances of their birth are already somewhat cloudy, since very little has been recorded or published of the events leading to the start of some of the schools.

The most significant developments seem to have taken place in Boston, with the first community schools opening in the black ghetto in 1966, at the height of the Hicks-Eisenstadt era of the Boston school committee. There had for some years been a tutoring program run by St. Anne's Episcopal Church, in the North Dorchester section of Boston. The program, run by the minister, the Reverend Hugh Findley, was held in the basement of the church, primarily served the children of the immediate neighborhood. It was staffed by white volunteers and local parents. The area around the church was a close-knit community, comprising both whites and blacks, but mostly black and mostly from the lowest economic level.

The year 1964 was a time of extreme disillusionment and disgust with the public schools, and there was a general feeling that desperate measures were justified. Some of the members of the tutoring program staff decided to form their own school, a private school in which they could create their own environment. Planning was started, visits were made to inspect some of the progressive schools in the area, and people from local universities were invited to discuss the possibilities.

Apparently a split occurred in the ranks of the organizers quite early in the planning process. The difference seems to have been largely along class lines. On the one hand, the professional people in the group felt strongly that what was needed above all was a good school, drawing on all the resources of the area. On the other hand, the poor people living in the immediate neighborhood felt equally strongly that control should rest in their hands, and that the intrusion of professional outsiders would impair the validity of the entire scheme. There were also, no doubt, some personal differences among the leaders. The disaffection of the middle-class outsiders was increased by the evident uncertainties and apprehensions of the ghetto residents, which led to the conviction that they were not capable of running a school. Moreover, the lack of attention paid by some of the ghetto residents to such "common courtesies" as saying "thank you" was simply too much for some of the middle-class members to take.

As a result, there emerged two separate groups. The first was dominated by professionals, who wanted a "good school," in the usual sense of a progressive private school, utilizing the full facilities of local educational know-how, and at the same time making sure that the black children in the school would receive more sympathy and understanding than they got in the public schools. The second group was comprised mostly of people from the neighborhood near the church, who wanted to go it alone, not rejecting professional help, but seeking to ensure that professionals and academics did not dominate it, and making every effort to see that the school would reflect in some favorable way the character of life as it was lived on their street.

The remarkable outcome of this enterprise, then, was not one school but two, each reflecting the social status of its founders--the one relatively well funded, having multiple links to the business and academic world of greater Boston, the other scraping almost unnoticed to a shaky start, its existence known only to a very few.

The New School for Children started out in 1966 with a building housing a kindergarten and four grades. The children were drawn from the entire metropolitan area, the policy being to ensure a group of children with mixed ethnic and economic backgrounds, black and white, rich and poor, in the belief that this was in the best interest of the ghetto children. The annual tuition was $250, with a reduction or remission of the fee for those whose parents could demonstrate poverty. The school relied heavily on the resources of the Harvard Graduate School of Education. At the same time, with some financial aid from the church and a few well-wishers, the Roxbury Community School was able to open with a kindergarten and first grade, in the basement of the church, with plans for adding a grade each succeeding year. Most of the children came from within walking distance, most of them were very poor, and of course no tuition fee was charged. During the first year, a plan was set in motion to obtain and remodel a fire-damaged building in the neighborhood to house the school.

The Roxbury Community School was poor, unknown, learning by experience and managing to cope with the uncertainties of day-to-day existence--a mode of living not unfamiliar to many of the parents in the school. It was controlled by a very basic form of democracy which is probably only possible when the group is small and all are of approximately the same status. It can be argued that the very weakness of the school--its isolation from the mainstream of middle-class America with its money, materials, expertise, and influence--in the long run was its greatest strength. For several years, at least, it operated within the community, making its own way on the basis of hard-won private contributions, essentially free of the stultifying influence of the class-bound professional educator. The teaching methods that were developed were designed to suit the needs of the particular children in the school. Not that modern methods were not used--they were. What was absent was the idea that professional educators must be looked to as the springs of knowledge; their doctrines as biblical truth.

A charter principle of the Roxbury Community School was the direct and intensive involvement of parents in the operation of the school in all its aspects, for their greatest fear was to be made unnecessary by "experts." They did not know--they could not--that they were tackling a problem not yet solved, indeed not even comprehended, in academia. Yet from the very beginning, in 1966, the Roxbury Community School instituted as the keystone of its teaching method a system which has since gained considerable vogue, the use of an untrained parent in the classroom as an equal copartner of a trained teacher. The equality was not one of mere lip service, but a working principle. The parent was an actual neighbor of many of the children, someone whom the children could respect, whose authority they would accept, and who would deal with the children in a familiar way, something quite impossible for most white middle-class teachers, however well-intentioned, to achieve. The young newly trained white teacher who seeks a job in the

ghetto tends generally either to persist in pushing textbook techniques adapted to suburban serenity or to indulge in extreme sentimentalism. A well-chosen person from the community, working in a spirit of genuine cooperation with the teacher, can provide the necessary ingredient of reality, thus creating a classroom environment conducive to learning, and at the same time giving the children a living example of racial and social equality.

In 1968, a third community school, the Highland Park Free School, was opened in Boston's Roxbury district, and again the details of its founding are not clear. It was apparently started by the Educational Development Center or people connected with it who also had connections in Roxbury. It served a compact area intermediate in size between those of the two previous schools. No tuition fee was charged, although it appears that some of the more well-to-do parents were expected to make payments in lieu of a fee. At first the community had no control over the school, which was held by a small group of middle-class blacks and whites, most of whom lived in the ghetto or on its fringes. They in turn apparently gave almost absolute authority to the principal, whom they appointed and whom they expected to develop community involvement in the school. During the first two years he succeeded in creating a very active, informed, responsive body of parents who took a major role in making the school a success.

The school adopted the combined parent-teacher team in each class, but, in accordance with the temper of the time, it was stated that the community parent was to be in charge of the classroom, with the (white) professional teacher having the subordinate role of technician (in addition to ensuring technical compliance with the law). It was hoped that by this means the children would acquire their cultural values from the black parent rather than from the white teacher.

To understand the differences between these schools, and their changing characters, it is necessary to remember that, in the two years between the opening of the first two schools and this one, a considerable change in attitude among black people had taken place, a change which was accelerated by the murder of Martin Luther King in 1968. Integration was no longer an immediate goal, and was definitely opposed by some. A new attitude toward the ghetto developed: since it was to be the permanent home of many of the residents, whether they liked it or not, let it become a happy and healthy community. Efforts were made to slow the skimming process, whereby those who reached a sufficient level of prosperity moved out of the ghetto to the suburbs. Those still there were encouraged to stay, and those who had already moved out were urged to return to help make the ghetto a self-reliant, viable community. The same exclusiveness customarily shown to blacks in the suburbs was shown toward whites coming to the ghetto. Whites were expected to come into the ghetto to help when called on, to serve as technicians having particular skills, but not as policy-makers or friends. The contributions of the white community, both financial and in services, were looked upon as reparations for past damage, as a simple act of justice, expected as a matter of right.

This attitude gave rise to some new divisions in the ranks of the white middle-class liberals who had traditionally supported the drive for integration. Many retired in confusion to the suburbs, confining their efforts to occasional gifts. A few chose the zombie routine, seeing their role as white equivalents of Stepin Fetchit, saying "Yessir" and "Nossir" to the black people with a com-

pletely uncritical mind, apparently in the condescending belief that this was the way to build up black self-confidence. Still others attempted to retain some influence by associating with influential blacks and took pains to take the most radical, anti-white position on every issue. This tactic sometimes backfired on the community, in which case, of course, it was the blacks who were left holding the baby. By and large, however, this sort of activity was seen for what it was by black leaders, who soon developed in stature and in numbers to the point where the role of the white activist was greatly diminished.

Little seems to have happened in other cities in the way of establishing private community schools of this sort. In fact during this period Boston was nationally renowned more for its resistance to school integration than for its Cabots, cod, and colleges, and so perhaps the climate was created by the Boston school committee. In some cities, progress was made within the public school systems in that isolated schools in black ghetto areas were allowed a certain amount of community control. In New York City, limited community control was achieved in some areas, but direct parental involvement in the school does not seem to have been a major objective. In Washington, D.C., the Morgan School community was able to work out a modus vivendi with the school authorities whereby certain powers were delegated to the local community. In practice, however, the school had a contract with Antioch College in Ohio which actually managed the school, leaving only limited possibilities for parent participation. It required prodigious effort on the part of the principal to ensure that parents would be involved in a major way in the more vital aspects of the school.

In Boston more recently, the Council for Community Education Development was formed to work with the state board of education toward developing an experimental public school system for the Boston metropolitan area which would serve as a model for urban education in the future. The council is a private corporation, and its members are, to quote its brochure, "civic leaders, scholars, and educators from many institutions and agencies in greater Boston and residents of Roxbury and other target communities." The goal appears to be a school system integrated on a metropolitan basis, presumably with extensive busing: the official literature states that "the system will ultimately consist of a league of schools, serving children three to eighteen, each located in a different kind of neighborhood, but each drawing from all neighborhoods." The system is endowed with a considerable bureaucracy, which appears to be retarding progress as bureaucracies are supposed to do.

It appears that each school will be operated on a Summerhillian basis: "These schools would be governed by boards representing parents, pupils, staff and community working together." The classrooms are to be unstructured. While it is still too soon to draw any conclusions about community involvement, it is clear that this is a complex way to go about achieving wholesale integration. However, the scheme as put forward is genuinely experimental in nature, and, if pursued in this light, may lead to significant new methods. There is no doubt that the major problems of urban education cannot be solved within the present structure of public school control and financing. However, if the scheme is predicated on busing, it is bound to meet formidable opposition.

Most other community control efforts around the country, in Philadelphia and in Inkster, Michigan, for example, have been dedicated primarily to achieving control of the schools, or some aspect of them, through elections, representation

on boards, and so on. Day-to-day involvement of parents is not at issue. Since the community-control movement does not encompass this kind of parent participation, it is not given great emphasis here, important as it is in its own right.

Continued Development

The first step, that of starting and bringing a school to life is one of the biggest, but only one of many. Keeping it going, and on the desired track, is a much less exhilarating and often more discouraging job than starting it.

Financial difficulties, staff problems, internal dissension, and many other problems are bound to occur. Outside pressures will arise from those who wish to donate, those who wish the school to fail, and those who, sensing a successful venture in the making, wish to get in at the front of the parade.

Each of the schools discussed has passed through various phases in the space of a few years. The Roxbury Community School for the first few years lived a literally day-to-day existence. There were times when staff could not be paid. Fortunately, the parents were familiar with privation and uncertainty and able to take them in their stride. In the early stages, the school was very small, and a real community spirit was developed, building on the spirit that already existed in the neighborhood. Structure was informal, parents entered classrooms at will, and there was free and full discussion of problems by the parents as a body. As the school grew in size year by year, the sense of intimacy became less, the bonds tended to become weaker, and instead of one group acting in unison, factions tended to develop. However, the constant state of uncertainty about the continued existence of the school was a strong factor for unity, and so the parents, who constituted the governing body, were generally able to pull together when it really counted.

The increase in size brought more staff, not all of whom were equally sympathetic to all the principles of the school. Some teachers, for example, objected to parents' visiting classrooms unannounced and uninvited. As the school grew, it became clear that some formal structure, rules, and by-laws had to be introduced to keep some sort of order. Keeping a high degree of parent involvement during this growth process became one of the major tasks of the administration. Increasing size and formality, and the intrusion of more professionally trained people who, either deliberately or as a result of their training, tended to look askance at the ordinary people, all tended to inhibit participation by local parents, who were inevitably made to feel redundant or incapable.

It is virtually impossible to convince a person with little formal education that the college-educated teacher, or psychologist, or whatever who goes about using elaborate, technical-sounding language is half the time only expressing very ordinary thoughts not beyond anyone's grasp, and the rest of the time is usually spouting specious nonsense. This kind of talk when used in the everyday sphere serves the primary practical purpose of denoting the speaker's class, not his knowledge, and ought to be stamped out. It is not necessary and is positively harmful. Perhaps the most important single step which could be taken by those desiring a more nearly equal society would be

would be the ruthless eradication of this kind of jargon on the part of all university-educated who would give the impression of superior understanding.

The community schools are all closely tied to the social movement going on around them. Therefore, as the mood of the ghetto veered from integrated schools to schools of its own, so the community schools which had initially fostered the enrollment of white children from both city and suburbs were under increasing pressure from both the community at large and their own parents and staff to reallocate these places to black children living nearer the schools. Some black teachers also wanted to have all-black classes to facilitate the teaching of black awareness.

There also appeared to be a cleavage between the whites and some college-educated blacks on the one hand, and the poor and the working-class parents on the other, about teaching methods and classroom structure. Most of those trained in the more liberal American schools of education or the social sciences favor the free, unstructured approach, and most schools start out, in theory at least, on this premise. However, the parents of the children involved almost all prefer a more formal structure, with some evidence of progress. It is all very well for people with two or three university degrees to come down to the ghetto and say that too much emphasis is placed on the basic skills, or to make disparaging remarks about formal education in general. The obvious inconsistency of what they say however, is not lost on the parents, who have a good idea they got where they are through a great deal of pretty conventional schooling.

There is thus a certain amount of polarization in education along class lines: the comfortably placed professional and business group on the one hand, and the working-class and welfare group on the other. It is also quite evident that the success of an enterprise in terms of financial stability and national recognition is strongly related to the strength of its links to the sources of wealth--the big corporations, foundations, state and federal governments. This network is in the main made-up of well-informed, well-connected, middle-class gentry who communicate informally through professional acquaintances, business connections, old college buddies, and the like. In the ghetto, this network becomes rather tenuous, and there are places it does not reach at all. When an organization such as a school needs financial help, it must be vouched for by members of the network: if members of the middle class are not involved, there is little chance of an application's being looked on with favor. This poses a fundamental problem. How can ordinary people get together and help themselves, with adequate financial resources provided by those who control wealth, without being dominated by a race and a class who do not understand them or accept them as equals?

The only solution, it seems, is to work toward a major redistribution of the economic power of the country, and education must play a part in this process. Here is where community schools can be involved. All the schools described here are trying to bring better education to the ghetto. This is not difficult to do in principle, in the accepted sense of better equipment, books which talk in familiar terms, teachers who speak sympathetically to the children, and so on. All it needs is money, which in turn requires a change of heart on the part of white people but hardly requires special research. Those schools which give a better education, in the usual sense, are no doubt serving well those few

children they reach, but there is doubt whether they do anything for the rest.

The introduction of schools like Summerhill or those in Newton and Sudbury will not by itself eliminate poverty or redress the balance of power, for what will work in the affluent suburbs will not work in the ghetto. In all classes there are children who by their intelligence, their ambition, or their winning disposition will make life at least a tolerable experience. Even in the ghetto they stand a fair chance, for all they need is opportunity. But also in all classes of people are those who lack some of these attributes. In the suburbs, they will probably turn out to be among the less successful, in the conventional meaning of the word, but the advantages of class will ensure that they are adequately provided for, and they will find some comfortable niche. The same group in the heart of the ghetto have no such cushion to fall upon. These are the children who need the help of a favorable environment.

Schools in the ghetto have as one of their tasks overcoming the burden of powerlessness. The seemingly cavalier attitude to education often seen in the suburbs and the schools of education is not for them. Education in the ghetto is a deadly serious business. Different methods are called for, methods involving the people themselves in the process which affects them so vitally. When community schools show how this can be done, they will have performed a service of great value.

3. THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL IN THE BLACK GHETTO

Let us take a closer look at some of the aspects of a community school that set it apart from other schools. The type of school we want to consider is one in the black ghetto, serving the working class, and the poor, where the need is greatest: one which not only attempts to provide education superior to available alternatives, but which does so through extensive and intensive involvement of parents in the educational process; one which serves a small community or neighborhood compact enough for parents to have convenient access to the school whether or not they own a car.

The school is governed by the community or the parents, or at least it is operated on their behalf and in their best interests, according to their expressed wishes. The goal is to provide a good education for the children of the neighborhood. The day-to-day operation of the school is assumed to be in the hands of a principal or administrator who is answerable to the community. The act of hiring a principal is perhaps the most critical step the community takes since success or failure will stem largely from his efforts. A sense of mutual trust between the principal and the parents is essential. He is expected to direct the school according to sound principles, while at the same time acting in the best interests of the children, their parents, and the community.

We want here to deal mainly with those features of a community school designed to cause change. Before doing so, we need to mention certain activities which are subservient to the main purpose of the school, but which unfortunately absorb a great deal of the available effort. These are the mundane but vital functions of keeping the funds coming in, keeping the building and facilities in good repair and supplies in stock, and all the other managerial responsibilities.

Fund raising is one area where parents can get involved in a major way, by organizing and speaking to interested groups, and by helping to prepare proposals and put them before potential donors. In addition, people who might be willing to give, or those who can spread the word, must be shown over the school to acquaint them with its work. This can become a burden, but failure to create enough operating income can result in not being able to pay salaries on time: in the ghetto, this can be devastating. It is also necessary to take all the steps which will keep the building open so that school can continue--compliance with various city regulations, provision of heat and utilities, and so on. Here again, parents can play principal roles. These activities, essential as they are, and providing as they do a channel for parent participation, are incidental to the main purpose of involving parents in the process of education.

The rest of this chapter is devoted to three main areas of community school operation: parent involvement, teaching practices and problems, and stability.

Parent Involvement

In an ordinary situation, the principal and the professional teachers would satisfy what was required of them if they performed their duties according to the standards of their profession, with due regard to the expressed

wishes of their employers, the parents. But the community school is not an ordinary situation, and their duties ought to go beyond this. The parents are not in a position to be aware of all the functions they can perform, nor do they always have the self-confidence to attempt them. The principal and the professionally trained teachers must organize the work of the school in such a way as to make room for parent involvement at many levels and on a broad front. The teacher should be closely acquainted with the parents of each child in his class and work with them--in effect co-opting the parents onto the teaching staff. The principal should learn to discern the natural abilities of each parent he meets and encourage the parent to accept corresponding responsibility, whether working with children, being a committee member or chairman, doing clerical work, publicity or fund raising, or performing another of the many services needed to keep the school functioning. At times this policy can result in less efficient operation than if the positions were filled by experienced workers hired especially for their competence in the job. but relying on such people would entirely defeat the ends of the school. Some inefficiency has to be accepted as part of the operating expense of the school. It is rather odd that many people who take for granted the inevitability of inefficiency on an enormous scale in the federal bureaucracy or in large private corporations object to it in small proportions when it has a socially useful purpose.

The parent sometimes needs to be encouraged to become more involved in his own child's education. For this purpose, each parent should be given free access to the teacher and the school, since it is very important that he or she become aware of the child's potentialities, which may not become evident until the child is exposed to classroom or playground situations.

If the principal and teachers do not live in the neighborhood, they should at least become involved in it to the extent of keeping aware of current events there--celebrations, deaths, illnesses, fires, and so on. These are inseparable from the life and work of the school, if the integration of school and community is to be complete. Only by personal experience can the outsider see the world as it is viewed by those who live in the ghetto. For example, the dislike of police is more easily appreciated when the teacher has seen at first hand a policeman point a loaded gun at an unarmed child suspected of stealing something from a store.

The community school is a very different place from the businesslike suburban school, not because of any basic difference in ability or makeup of the residents in the two areas, but rather a difference in goals. The suburbs are carrying on a defensive action, the ghetto is on the attack; the ghetto desires change, while the suburbs are geared to resist it. Ghetto parents must work harder to offset the advantages that wealth can bring. Nor can they lose sight of the fact that, for the foreseeable future, their children will have to compete in a white man's world, on the white man's terms, on the white man's ground, and while the struggle goes on against this basic inequality there is little choice but to live with it. This means that the speech, manners, and morals of the successful person are likely to be those of the white middle-class American: the black aspirant to success, or even to a modest job, must conform to some degree. Thus, insofar as they differ, the black man from the ghetto is required to learn two cultures, not because his own is inferior by any objective standard, but because the standard is set by the white middle class.

Of all the official roles open to parents, the most fundamental one is participating in the governance of the school. In a small neighborhood school, the parents as a body can govern the school. In a larger school, elected representatives are more practical. Unfortunately, mere participation in an annual election does not necessarily constitute involvement, and so there is a strong argument to be made for very small schools. In any case, admission of all parents to all meetings should be permitted and encouraged.

Whether parents alone or community residents as a whole should be allowed to participate in governance of the school is a valid question. The parents of the children in the schools are of special importance because of the direct part they play in the education of their own children. On the other hand, certain needed talent may be excluded by keeping out nonparent residents. Perhaps the best solution is for the parent board to co-opt individuals as seems desirable, but leave actual control in the hands of those who are personally involved--the parents. It is a fact of parent control, however, that there will exist a built-in age gap of a dozen years or so between the oldest children and the youngest parents, and this may be undesirable. One school makes special provision on its board for representation by nonparent residents to fill this age gap.

To be effective, the board should meet at frequent intervals, say, monthly, with additional meetings in times of emergency. If the board does not consist of all the parents, each meeting should be open to all, as visitors with the right to speak.

The board decides basic issues such as admissions policy, factors which affect the basic character of the school, its links to other bodies, and so on, and it has the last say in hiring and dismissing staff. In its decisions, the board must, of course, give great weight to the recommendations of the principal or administrator, who is burdened with the heavy responsibility of the day-to-day operation of the school. Without this kind of trust, the school cannot be stable and effective. Equally important, however, the board should not become merely a rubber stamp. It is easy for a board to accept without comment all the recommendations of the administration, serving only as a forum for individual complaints. The conscientious principal will not permit this, because he knows that active involvement by a parent will be reflected favorably in his children, not to mention the advantage to the community of a more active, informed and stimulated citizenry. The principal and staff should therefore see to it that the facts of every issue are clearly explained and the consequences of a variety of possible decisions made clear. Discussion should be stimulated by every possible means and the burden of the final decision be placed squarely on the shoulders of the parents. There is very often a natural reserve on the part of many people to come forward and speak in public, even when they have something very significant to say. Because this reserve is heightened when outsiders, especially "professionals," are present, meetings should be held, as far as possible, without such people. The professional go-to-meeting American seems to have swallowed a copy of Robert's Rules of Order, with which he assumes everyone has signed a binding compact to comply, and which he uses to thwart genuine discussion and intimidate those whose concepts of democracy are more direct.

To get the people of the ghetto to participate in a governing body of this kind is not easy; it requires sustained effort. Adults who have not experienced

these procedures in college or in professional or business activity become accustomed to it only gradually. Constant vigilance by the administration is necessary to see that the people do in fact control and that they themselves are not tempted to assume authority by default.

The use of parents as coteachers was conceived at a time when, with few exceptions, the only available teachers were white. College-trained black teachers were few, and they had many good positions available to them from white schools under pressure to desegregate their staff. The teachers available to work in the ghetto were therefore almost all white, young, idealistic, believing with religious fervor in the simplistic ideas of the "free School" advocates. Very often, also, such people are driven by a masochistic urge to defy the "establishment" of which they themselves are the scions and inheritors, coming to the ghetto with self-centered interest but without understanding. Even though they may move into the ghetto to live, and join in some of the activities there, they rarely come to understand the nature of life there. Their upbringing and their connections with the middle class are ever-present; they need not and do not view life in the ghetto from the same point of view as the one who is there, not by choice, but by chance. (The marks of class acquired in childhood are not readily sloughed off in adulthood. The middle-class citizen gravely deceives himself if he believes that, by coming into the ghetto with paint-spattered pants and torn sneakers and dropping the occasional four-letter word in rounded tones, he can pass for black or poor.)

The problem was further complicated by race difference. A sense of personal guilt over the oppression of black people weighs heavily on the average white liberal, leading him to wish above all else to be well thought of by black people. As a teacher, such a person tends to be excessively indulgent, an attitude which is reinforced by his upbringing in the ultrapermissive middle-class suburbs.

Under the circumstances, having a black parent in the classroom with the trained teacher was a wise and enlightened move. Experience has shown that, when done properly, it leads to excellent results. If the two teachers work and plan together, then the differences in race and class that exist between white teacher and black child are removed, being taken care of at the teacher-to-teacher level. Hence such elaborate and questionable concepts as "black language" become quite superfluous. Likewise, swearing and profanity can be handled without difficulty. If the white teacher is too severe, the parent can put it into context; if the white teacher has a compulsion to write four-letter words on the blackboard, the parent will probably restrain him. In fact, one of the most important jobs the parent has in the classroom is to see that the white teacher does not use the black children as means to vent his own rage with society.

Even though the two teachers are considered as equals within the school, there still exists a basic inequality, since the teacher who has a degree from any college is recognized nationally as a teacher, whereas the community parent is not. To overcome this, the early community schools initiated programs in collaboration with local universities to give suitable courses and an appropriate qualification to parent-teachers who completed the course. Such an arrangement is not ideal, for it basically depends on an organization rooted in white middle-class tradition, with its standards, and involves the teachings of white

middle-class beliefs. These programs are still in an early stage, and no real conclusions can be drawn at this time.

When two persons of nominally equal status are put in charge of a class, there always exists the possibility of an intense rivalry developing between them. It is therefore up to the principal to make assignments with a view to minimizing this likelihood and to keep abreast of the situation in each classroom and be ready to take action before any serious clash occurs. Needless to say, the principal must be accessible to the staff if this goal is to be accomplished. Any teacher should be free to unburden himself to the principal when he feels the need.

The system can also be nullified if one of the two teachers dominates the other. Some trained teachers look upon themselves as models for others to copy, while some parents are overawed by a display of expertise or refinement on the part of the trained teacher. On the other hand, some sentimental white teachers are unwilling to do or say anything which implies criticism of the black parent, however ill-advised the parent's actions may be. In such cases the system is not working, and it is up to the principal to take corrective action.

Some of the merits of the two-teacher system still exist even when the trained teacher is black, since he probably is middle-class, may not be familiar with ghetto life, and may well have been indoctrinated with white concepts of teaching adapted to life in the suburbs. The method aims above all else to remove the evidence of race or class differences from the teacher-to-child level to the teacher-to-teacher level, and to provide the child with the inspiration and encouragement he needs to break the pervasive feeling of hopelessness and powerlessness which may have bound his home and his neighborhood in the past.

Almost all the full-time and part-time jobs in the school organization can be filled by parents. For those jobs which require training or experience, such as bookkeeping, contracting, purchasing, and planning, guidance from qualified persons can be valuable. This is not always easy to arrange, however; the typical businessman, with his conservative ideas and his emphasis on efficiency, is likely to cause frustration and resentment in the parent who is suddenly thrust into this situation. On the other side, the liberal, unwilling to offend, will often give uncritical praise or encouragement when advice or information would be much more appropriate. In the long run, parents have to learn the hard way, by experience, and this takes time. Meanwhile, they must be supported and encouraged; each parent who drops out through discouragement or intimidation is a loss to the school, a blow which it can ill afford.

A very effective way to get parents involved on a broader scale is to form special-purpose committees, each assigned to a specific function such as fund-raising, public relations, overseeing of services (catering, cleaning, etc.), monitoring the performance of hired staff, and so on. Such committees not only perform useful services and broaden the community involvement in the school, but they also provide considerable scope for initiative and independent action by the people on them.

There is one important way in which all parents should become involved;

through their own children. They should become conversant with what is being taught in school and how it is being taught. Because of the prevailing attitude of parents to the public schools, the feeling that the school belongs to the community is a strong spur to most parents for giving encouragement to their children and supporting the teachers. The schools have an obligation to make it possible for every parent to find out at any time how his child is progressing and what part he himself can play. In some schools, the classrooms are open to parents as observers, but this can be disruptive and is opposed by many teachers. In any case, the teacher himself should not only be available to each parent, but should in fact establish some sort of rapport with him. The school should also, within its means, provide nonreturnable equipment and books for the child to take home so that home activity may form a natural continuation of classwork. Parents naturally need to be involved in planning such activity.

Beyond formal participation, there are other broader aspects which should not be overlooked. Vandalism of schools is a serious problem in all public school buildings today. In the community school of the close-knit neighborhood variety, with genuine community control, vandalism and theft seldom take place. The community respects the school and regards it as something of great value. The school building can also serve as a community center, and the organization can serve as a director of community activities and as a channel of communication.

Teaching Practices and Problems

There are important differences between the ghetto and other places which reflect the differing needs of the schools in these areas. In the first place, teachers in the suburbs and in many white urban schools come from the same general background as the children and share many of the parents' views and beliefs. In the ghetto, this is rarely the case for the teacher is often of a different culture and race. Thus a circumstance which is often taken for granted elsewhere becomes a primary issue in the black ghetto: the determination to make the school a harmonious part of the life of the child.

Teaching methods clearly need to be adapted to circumstances, and it is very dangerous to assume that methods which "work" in the suburbs will be successful in the ghetto, for standards ought to be more stringent where the penalty for failure is greater. Most parents in the ghetto prefer more orthodox classroom procedure, and in some respects they are right, since the free-school atmosphere is more compatible with the suburban home of the submissive parent than with the more authoritarian home of the ghetto. Moreover, there is very little convincing evidence to prove that these more extreme "innovative" methods contribute to better basic education. It would therefore be quite wrong, as many well-meaning liberals would like, to thrust on these parents and their children a system of teaching which they neither want nor need. Indeed, many of the theories propounded by the current crop of "experts" are based on a concept of the eggshell-fragility of children, which has an aura of unreality in the ghetto. They inescapably impugn the ability of parents, presumably once themselves subjected to the deadening effects of a viscious and inhibiting school system, to control the eucation of their own children. Fortunately, for the majority of the world's people, children are more robust than that.

Some innovations are certainly in order, but only if they further the goals of the school. Even so, it is wise to proceed cautiously, taking the parents into the planning at each stage. The school should not be used as thesis-fodder. The "integrated-day" method shows promise, provided it is in the hands of resourceful, adaptable teachers and is kept generally compatible with home life.

Never to be forgotten in this process are two realities: that the child may eventually have to return to a public school, and that he must compete with white people for jobs, and compete on unequal terms, when he leaves school.

Some sort of discipline is necessary to learning. There is a path between repressive and stultifying discipline, on the one hand, and domesticated riot, on the other, which, if followed, will result in disciplined learning. A good teacher can take a typical group of children and conduct an open class in which all the children learn with enthusiasm. One of the essential attributes of such a teacher in an open classroom is his ability, while teaching, to sense a provocative act before it happens and to divert a child's interest elsewhere without precipitating turmoil or creating a major disruption of the business at hand.

Unfortunately, the science of education has not progressed to the point where such skills can be taught. One has to be satisfied with a newly trained teacher who knows which end to hold a piece of chalk and the correct way to insert a slide in a magic lantern, and who has a head full of all the current philosophical notions about education. Frequently, these teachers either haven't the skill or the desire to operate a Leicestershire-like class and stray from the happy medium; they prefer the simpler and less mentally and physically demanding role of either the martinet or the sentimentalist. When a teacher encounters a discipline problem, he often singles out one or more children as "ringleaders," or classifies them as children with some sort of problem which makes them exceptional and not suited to be educated with the other children. In the affluent suburbs, these problem children frequently end up in private schools, where money has a remarkable efficacy in alleviating the child's disorder.

In the ghetto, the teacher whose standards of proper deportment are derived from the suburbs is likely to find such children quite frequently and request that they be withdrawn from the school. Many parents of the school are inclined to support the teacher because of the adverse effect the disruptive children supposedly have on the rest of the class. The principal must resist this tendency, working to help the teacher solve the problem or reorganize the classes in such a way that the children end up in more capable hands. This indeed is an area where parents can play a very significant role, by providing extra part-time effort in handling children without severing them from the class altogether. It must never be forgotten that expelling a child of poor parents from school can be a disastrous, even terminal, act as far as the child is concerned. Unlike the suburban child, he does not fall on cushions; at best, he returns to the public school from which he sought to escape, probably subject to ridicule from the other children and possibly vindictive treatment by the teacher. Many worse fates can befall him.

There are, of course, genuine cases of disturbed children who pose the threat of physical danger to others, or who cannot be handled by the most able teacher. For these children the school administration should see that suitable treatment is sought without abandoning them entirely. Many of those who are hard to handle are among the brighter, more able students, who in the right hands can make remarkable progress. The community can ill afford to lose such talent. Such children do make extra work, and strain the school's limited resources, but there is a moral obligation, rooted in the basic nature of the school, to do the best possible for them, as members of the community. The principal must therefore work with the parents of the school to accept this burden as one of the essential roles of the school, for these are the very children who need the school most and have most to lose by being put out. If the school does not serve them, it does not serve its function at all.

For reasons already discussed, it is necessary that the school foster in black children a sense of pride in their race and their community. The task has been made much easier recently, since the black people of America have abandoned a long tradition of copying the styles and manners of white Americans in favor of more natural and distinctive ones of their own. The environment in which a black child grows up now gives him a feeling of belonging to a proud and distinct group of people. The role of the school in this process is to provide a continuation of this environment and the sound, basic education needed to help the child sustain his pride in his family and race when he is among those of other origins.

Some schools have attempted to indoctrinate children with pride of race by means of chants and slogans. When such a method is used, it is essential that the class be segregated. More suitable and effective, however, is a school permeated with materials and ideas conducive to a healthy attitude to race and community. Through the curriculum, the staff, the physical environment, and eventually the traditions of the school, the child will acquire the "right" attitudes. The most lasting effect will be produced, not by overbearing, uncritical, dogmatic teachings, but by a nutritious atmosphere. This method does not interfere with giving a sound, basic education, nor need it foster racist hatreds, for, if logically approached, it may be used with integrated classes.

For black children it is necessary that some special emphasis be placed on African history and culture, just as European Americans put great stock in their origins. This is especially important for black people in the United States, in view of the peculiarly vicious form of Negro slavery practiced here, one of the last systems to be abolished, and then only as the incidental outcome of a major war. Many vestiges of slavery still remain, and they cannot and should not be ignored by those who still feel the sting of the whip. Hence the curriculum should also deal with slavery, and from the black point of view.

The introduction of African lore into the curriculum can take many forms. One, of course, is to have Africans as teachers and consultants. Unfortunately, the introduction of foreign teachers is not advisable in areas where the influence of the American middle-class progressive is strong. A serious conflict arises when the foreign teacher expects to receive respect, as he would in his own country, from children raised to respect only themselves. In a neighborhood where submissive parents rise like automatons to support their children, the lot

of the foreign teacher is unbearable. With children, parents, and administrators against him, he is subjected to abuse and indignity, and the children learn nothing, least of all to respect people of different races and cultures. A recent example of this occurred in Newton, Massachusetts, the paragon of upper middle-class school systems, where a guest teacher from Nigeria was treated this way. The administration, instead of supporting her, told parents she was a troublemaker, an attitude that parents promptly relayed to their children.

In areas where parents bring their children up as pampered individualists, the use of foreign teachers is unwise. In the ghetto, provided suburban and university influences are not strong, there is much to be gained from the frequent and widespread presence of African teachers.

Swahili has been introduced in some schools. While this is just as relevant to blacks as the teaching of European modern languages to whites, it is not likely to be more than symbolic unless it is a continuing part of the curriculum. The scarcity of qualified teachers is bound to restrict such efforts, but the widespread introduction of African teachers would make them more feasible. Indeed the use of native speakers as teachers of all foreign languages is a practice which merits revival.

African culture can be brought into the curriculum by the usual methods--African games, African arts and crafts, and books and films. At one school, the children built a replica of an African hut with the help of a consultant.

The children can learn about their community and its people and places by having community people visit and work regularly in their classrooms, by sharing experiences with one another in class, and through outings in the neighborhood.

While these are necessary parts of the work of the school, it is important that they not be used as excuses for not also providing a sound, basic education, for all else is lost without this.

Last, but by no means least, is the question of moral training. In all societies, most children are taught values and principles which are socially stabilizing and thus serve the best interests of the government. In a basically egalitarian, humane society this is not necessarily a bad thing, but in a society which contains a seriously underprivileged and underrepresented minority, this minority must, insofar as it has the power, teach its own children those values most relevant to their own situation. As the founders of the republic so eloquently pointed out, the ethics which are best for a perfect society no longer pertain in a situation of manifest injustice.

It is very important to give to the children of the poor a lasting set of moral values which will help steer them toward a happier life and provide them with confident answers to the moral dilemmas that confront them. In this the upper classes provide no example. It is natural for the affluent American to sheer away from the teaching of morality, since any universally acceptable system of values is bound to be distasteful to the privileged; it has not yet been demonstrated that a camel can pass through the eye of a needle.

On the other hand, the poor can unequivocally take to heart the values of the age of liberalism, now almost universally professed but less frequently

followed, the ideals of equality, of social justice, of brotherhood. Children should be brought up to cherish these values, to examine them in the abstract and the concrete, and to forge from them a personal code of morality.

In addition to a general sense of right and wrong, and of the way society ought to be, the child of the ghetto must also learn how to survive in the world as it is in a society which gives to each policeman the power of execution without trial for such offenses as running away when told to stand still, and where human life is held in lower regard than wealth and property. It is the obligation of the school to give the child the values which will guide him through his daily life yet leave him convinced that a better way can be won, a society in which all can lead happy lives. This objective is not met by the other-wordly tub-thumping of the traditional school nor is it met by allowing the middle-class carpetbagger to come down to the ghetto preaching anarchy and revolution. The content of moral training must be given deep thought and applied consistently. It must not be avoided.

Stability

It is one thing to start a school; it is quite another to keep it going over the long haul without diverging from its main purpose. Several agencies can cause the school to stray, and it is necessary to be on constant guard against them. Almost inevitably, the passage of time results in a degree of fossilization. The staff tend to become less active, less sensitive, and a set routine develops. The time spent by the staff in actively fostering parent involvement drops off as other more routine duties develop, and reversion to purely token parent involvement may occur. The end result is then just another private school. Each year new parents become associated with the school who were not part of the founding and who will be more than happy to have a well-run school to which they can send their children.

Also, if the school is growing in size, relations with parents may become more impersonal. These drawbacks of increasing school age and size, which can set in very quickly indeed, must be tackled firmly if they are not to take root. Suitable rules should be introduced to help maintain effective community control. For example, it can be required that all officers of the school hold their positions for only a limited time--say, one year, after which a new election or appointment must be made. In this way, a larger proportion of the parents can participate in governance of the school, and the likelihood of an "old guard" developing can be reduced by making sure that the group of new parents entering the school each year are given a change to get involved. Even more effective would be the requirement that one or more offices be specifically reserved for a new parent. If annual elections are held, they should not occur until all new parents have had some time to become acquainted with the school and the other parents. Along the same lines, the principal and staff should never be granted long-term contracts, tenure, seniority, or any of the other privileges in which suburban teachers luxuriate. The only real control that ordinary folk have over the specialists they employ is to be able to fire them. The suburbs can afford to staff their schools with adherents of ephemeral fads and keep them around for years after these pet theories have proved useless or harmful; the ghetto cannot afford less than the best.

A certain minimum involvement by every parent should be required, but it should be flexible enough to make sure it does not inflict hardship on already overburdened parents. The whole school, not just the reception area, should be open to all parents on some basis consistent with good organization.

It seems that there is a certain maximum size above which the school cannot function as a true community school, and this limit is rapidly reached. It is probab'y better to start a second small school nearby rather than overexpand.

The school can also be affected adversely if there is too much dissension among the parents or between parents and the principal or the staff. There may be genuine disagreement over such deeply held beliefs as whether the school should be integrated or all black, where to place emphasis in the curriculum, decisions on hiring or firing a staff member, expelling children, and so on. If this dissension turns into a contest between permanent, irreconcilable factions, the staff becomes demoralized, it is impossible to plan for the future, and financial support is put in jeopardy. Unless some leadership develops, such dissension will ruin the school. There are also those who would use the school for personal ends, as a stepping stone to higher things or as a means of acquiring personal power. And there are individuals and groups who seek to use the school to further their own noneducational purposes, such as political or revolutionary ends. Whatever the intrinsic merit of these individuals or causes, they should not be allowed to destroy the school or adversely affect the children. The best defense is a body of parents who are actively involved in the work of the school.

Selecting the teaching staff is a difficult but critical task. If a wrong choice has been made and someone just doesn't meet the requirements, he should be removed as soon as possible. This policy should, of course, be made clear to each new teacher from the beginning. In the late 1960's, the choice of teachers was quite restricted. Because of low pay, an uncertain future, and lack of prestige associated with the job, a large proportion of those who applied were young, inexperienced, idealistic, upper middle-class white Americans. Most such people suffer from the endemic disease of their class, a neurotic guilt about their own privileged position in the ruling and consuming establishment of the country. Their urge for expiation leads frequently to irrational behavior, which is ultimately self-serving and often damaging to those who are affected by it.

They are usually individualists, adhering to the theory that teaching should be enjoyable. They often single out the more affable and likable children and spend most of their time with them, to the neglect of the others. This makes the teacher happy, but it is quite out of tune with the goals of the school; after all, the black children who find it easy to buddy up with a young white person are not the ones who are going to have the worst problems in America.

Some teachers turn out to have hidden motives, such as acquiring materials for theses, books, or papers, or making personal contacts in the community so they can act as agents for outside groups with other axes to grind. These undercover motives must always be watched for; they are not necessarily detrimental, but in some cases can be extremely serious. The black community has had much unhappy experience as involuntary guinea pigs for universities and other organizations, so the very revelation of hidden research in the school can be divisive.

There were also in the late 1960's a number of extremists and revolutionaries among the young people taking these jobs. They often took a job primarily to avoid or postpone being drafted, and their interests were political rather than educational or social. They saw black people as means rather than ends, as tools for promoting dissatisfaction and unrest. In one case, several employees of a community school were induced by such a teacher to resign in protest against an action by the parent governing body, with which there was some dissatisfaction, on the assurance by the teacher that the school would be forced to yield. It did not, and several employees who could not afford to lose their jobs were not rehired. The white teacher left soon thereafter to dabble in some other pool.

Finally, there are serious external pressures on the school which tend to turn it from its course. Those with power always enjoy exercising it over those who have none. This power is often disguised, subtle, even at times unintentional, but it is always present. The very fact that some people and organizations have money or influence which others need puts the ones who need them under pressure to do or say things they think will influence the benefactor. This is true of dealings with government as a regulating agency, and with possible donors of money or services. If the recipient voluntarily accepts the required conditions, the benefactor is in the happy position of claiming that no pressure was exerted. But more direct pressure is often applied. The more power-conscious will try to make the school dance to its tune; the more charitable at least expect conformity to the standards and principles they themselves believe in.

An example of exercise of power by a large foundation occurred in Boston. Three community schools, each quite distinct in character, were in great need of a more permanent source of funds. Through the subterranean channels of the Ivy League network came a substantial offer of money to keep the three schools in operation for three years. But there was a catch; the schools would have to federate. Naturally this was opposed by many in each school. In the true paternalistic spirit of "divide and conquer," the foundation had included a provision by which the existing debts of each school would first be wiped out, with the remaining funds to be distributed in proportion to the enrollment. Thus the school which had nurtured its resources and kept its size down to match its means was doubly penalized. The more profligate school was doubly rewarded.

The school which had much to gain by the arrangement--the one which was greatly in debt--was made to put great pressure on the school which was relatively stable and would have liked to hold out for a better deal. The device worked, and the three schools were forced into a federation, with added bureaucracy and red tape, decreased independence for the individual school, and the loss of the ideal of smallness and intimacy which federation entailed. It is not surprising that Mr. Ford's foundation puts great emphasis on bigness and efficiency, seeing the small neighborhood school as something akin to the garage auto manufacturer--an operation destined to die out. One can only regret that they have the power to impose their beliefs on others in this time-honored way.

4. THE NEED FOR A NEW PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

There is widespread agreement that the present course of American education is off the mark. A glance at any bookstore reveals the fact that fortunes are to be made out of the problems of public education. Almost all these books are by middle-class Americans who speak from the background of their own group. This is one manifestation of a deplorable situation in the education of the poor, and particularly the black poor, in this country, namely, that the system is operated, studied, criticized, reformed, or destroyed by the white middle class not by those who benefit or suffer from it.

Community schools offer one solution, though even they can all too easily become remotely controlled extensions of the white colleges through the all-pervading presence of their standardized graduates. What these schools, or any schools in poor areas, now need is an indigenous philosophy of education designed to serve their own interests, which are manifestly different from those of the ruling establishment.

What is the prevailing American philosophy of education? It is usually divided by its critics into two factions: the traditional, a general term for the practices of schools of the conventional pattern, and those referred to variously as progressive, innovative, experimental, child-centered, and so on. Obviously the choice of names is tendentious, implying as it does superiority and originality for the nontraditional approach. In fact, many schools categorized as traditional have incorporated the more practical suggestions of innovators, while the differences to be observed in the self-styled innovative schools are often more imagined than real, the "innovations" frequently predating the twentieth century. Consider, for example, the school in which it is said of the children that "all their instruction is rendered a pleasure and a delight to them; they are much more anxious for the hour of school-time to arrive than to end."[8] Of Robert Owen, the originator of these schools, it is said that he stressed

> the importance of appealing to more senses than one, and of making sight, as well as hearing, minister to the work of education. In summer, he would have much of the teaching done in the open air, by country walks, by direct study of nature, and by simple play. Indoors, he would have teaching done by maps, charts, coloured blocks and squares, and so enlist the visual powers on the side of rational education. Most unlike many of his contemporaries, he is always warning the teacher not to overstrain the child's mind by too continuous a demand for attention, and not to warp it by imposing lessons mechanically learned without being clearly understood. "The boys and girls are to be taught in the school to read well, and to understand what they read." Singing and dancing are to play a large part in the teaching as well as instruction in the rudiments of reading, writing, and arithmetic.[9]

This is a description of a school which flourished 160 years ago and catered to hundreds of working-class children, destined at the age of ten to begin a six-day work week in the mill for almost eleven hours a day.

The modern educational system is a product of the industrial revolution, which created the slums of Europe, established the colonial empires, and set off the waves of European immigrants to the factories and fields of America.

In the nineteenth century, universal elementary education was established in the world's industrial countries, and it is to the schools of this period that the term "traditional" is usually applied. It seems to imply a system of education in which a one-way transfer of knowledge takes place from a teacher to a class seated in a formal pattern, according to a set timetable and curriculum consisting largely of a miscellany of facts, supposed, facts and precepts to be committed to memory in an atmosphere of strict order and discipline. Traditionally, the aims of the American public schools have been achievement of universal literacy, inculcation of patriotism, and Americanization of the immigrant, and cultivation of the virtues of patriotism, thrift, ambition, and respect for property.

Criticism of the public schools has been unceasing. The most consistent and serious critic of nineteenth centruy traditional schools was John Dewey. We can assume that Dewey would look sympathetically on the community schools, for he believed that "the school life should grow gradually out of the home life . . . it should take up and continue the activities with which the child is already familiar in the home. The home is the form of social life in which the child has been nurtured and in connection with which he has had his moral training. It is the business of the school to deepen and extend his sense of the values bound up in his home life."[10]

Dewey's name is inseparably linked with the "progressive school" movement, which had some influence in America in the period between the two world wars. This association is largely unjust, however, since many of the schools labeled "progressive" caused him great distress. These schools were in fact of a different ancestry. Dewey stands on the radical edge of the liberal tradition, emphasizing reason and social conscience and relying on experimental and scientific method, which he said "is not just a method which it has been found profitable to pursue in this or that abstruse subject for purely technical reasons. It represents the only method of thinking that has proved fruitful in any subject--that is what we mean when we call it scientific. It is not a peculiar development of thinking for highly specialized ends; it is thinking so far as thought has become conscious of its proper ends and of the equipment indispensable for success in their pursuit."[11]

The line of thought which he opposed, but which has had by far the greater following among critics of the American schools, then as now, is the one which traces back to Rousseau. This theory rejects scientific method as the way to develop facts, relying instead on innate knowledge. The Rousseauist, even when facts prove him wrong, is likely to say "In my heart I know I'm right," and cannot therefore be argued with; he prefers emotion to reason as a guide to human conduct. It is undoubtedly this line of thought which Dewey had in mind when he wrote, in 1897, "Next to deadness and dullness, formalism and routine, our education is threatened with no greater evil than sentimentalism."[12] He describes the Rousseauist or Romantic philosophy of education as follows: "Some of the early educational philosophers, like Rousseau and his followers, made much use of the analogy of the development of a seed into the full-grown plant. They used this analogy to draw the conclusion that in human beings there are latent capacities, which, if they are only left to themselves, will ultimately flower and bear fruit. So they framed the notion of natural development as opposed to a directed growth which they regarded as artificial."[13] This philosophy of education, in one guise or another, permeates much current educational thought. Indeed,

it is probably inevitable that reaction to an established system should take the form of an emotional rather than a rational appeal.

The Sputnik crisis of the 1950's created a momentary reaction to the progressive movement. The hurt pride of the chauvinist and the morbid fear of Russia conspired for a while to create a furor for "basic" education, meaning science and mathematics. Criticism soon reverted to the Rousseauist variety--antiscientific, escapist, and emphasizing freedom and individuality in a society already devoid of any real fellow-feeling. These same sentiments are now pouring on American ears in torrents.

Little or none of this postwar criticism has much bearing on the ghetto. The would-be reformers, along with the educational systems they criticize, are to be understood in the light of the social system which cradled them. The dominant feature of the American scene today is a wide and growing rift between two social classes, who have very different views on education and different demands to make of it.

In its early days, white America was a truly classless society by comparison with the social structure of Europe. Ironically, the presence of Negro slavery made a more democratic white society possible. However, the twentieth century has seen the development of a large upper class composed of managers, executives, professional people, landlords, and middlemen (and an equal number of wives) who effectively control the country. At the other end stands a lower class of manual workers, service employees, laborers, and a large group of permanently unemployed. There is of course a large body of people who fall at neither extreme. The upper class or, as they prefer to call themselves, the "middle class," live in the better suburbs and depend on the automobile to ensure physical separation from the lower classes, who live in the inner city. This separation, which is by now well established, has led to the institution of a separate educational system for the middle class. The education which it gives naturally serves to preserve and increase the distinctions between the classes. The system of local control of schools has enabled the affluent suburbs to develop educational systems attuned to the needs of the middle class. But above all the college stands as their distinguishing mark. Every child from a middle-class family goes to college, if he chooses, as a matter of course; ability is not a factor, except as it may determine whether the child will attend a college of greater or lesser prestige.

This situation can be compared to what prevailed in secondary education in England at the time Tawney wrote this description:

> When the boys and girls of well-to-do parents attain the great age of thirteen to fourteen, no one asks whether-absurd phrase-they are 'capable of profiting' by further education. They continue their education as a matter of course, not because they are exceptional, but because they are normal, and the question of the 'profit' which they succeed in deriving from it is left, quite rightly, to be answered later. Working-class children have the same needs to be met, and the same powers to be developed. But their opportunities of developing them are rationed, like bread in a famine, under stringent precautions, as though, were secondary education made too accessible, the world would end.[14]

This description of the class-ridden system of secondary education in the England when adapted to the college level, makes a remarkably apposite statement of the situation in the United States today. Whereas the system in England was, and is, under constant attack, resulting in some moderation of the evil and at least ensuring continuing public awareness of inequality, no such controversy exists in the United States. By and large, educators are content to point with pride to the large number of students who go to college in America while ignoring or denying the implications of class distinction which attach to the system.

This class problem in America is particularly severe because of the large size of the middle class and the increasing amount of financial subsidy of the system. The child of a poor family starts work--if he can find it--in his teens. The income tax he pays goes in part to support the rich man's colleges, while the real estate taxes his parents pay in rent to their landlord also go in part to subsidize the colleges, which pay no tax. Many other privileges are accorded to, and even more demanded by, the middle-class youth in his college life, while the same privileges are not even discussed for the youth of the same age who goes to work and therefore apparently is beneath consideration.

At the high school level, an institutionalized system of inequality also prevails. The suburban high schools prepare children for lives as leaders, people of responsibility, directors of other people. The ghetto high school sees many of its students leave at, or sometimes before, the legal school-leaving age, often without even basic literacy, but above all without the feeling of having a respected place in the American order of things. Here again, while British progressives have been fighting the institutionalized inequality of their dual school systems, Americans have silently been building one up. The following description of the English "public" secondary school system cannot fail to bring to mind the contrast offered by suburban schools such as Newton, comfortably separated by three miles from the ghetto schools of Roxbury:

> A special system of schools, reserved for children whose parents have larger bank accounts than their neighbours . . . is at once an educational monstrosity and a grave national misfortune. It is educationally vicious, since to mix with companions from homes of different types is an important part of the education of the young. It is socially disastrous, for it does more than any other single cause . . . to perpetuate the division of the nation into classes of which one is almost unintelligible to the other.[15]

In evaluating various proposals for change in the educational system, then, it must be remembered that they are all rooted in values and beliefs which tend to be kind to this middle class, even if their authors disclaim intentional bias. There is always great emphasis on individualism, creativity, and freedom, values which undoubtedly have an essential place in any healthy society, but which, when held to the exclusion of social values, serve as a justification for great inequality, so-called "meritocracy." Reformist educational literature abounds with these concepts, as do the practices of the more liberal school systems.

Individualism in its extreme form, the belief that a just society is automatically achieved when each individual pursues his own interests, is at the root

of classical liberalism and is the main philosophical justification for the existence of great inequality in wealth and power. Also, the romantic prizes individualism as an attack on formality and social conformity. For one reason or another, therefore, most Americans admire aggressiveness, ambition, independence, and self-confidence above all other qualities, and so it will be found that, in most progressive or unstructured schools, teachers lavish attention on the forward child to the neglect of the shy. The child who does not push himself is not pressed; this is presumed to be his conscious choice and is accepted as such. The bright, active, self-confident children will be put forward as shining examples of the miraculous results of this or that method being used in a particular school. The others will never be classified as failures of the system, just as some religious believers thank God for the blessings they receive but never blame God for the tragedies they face.

A closely related theme is that of creativity. To the traditional liberal it is the sparkplug of industry, the seed from which the wealth of the community grows. The romantic prizes creativity as an expression of individual personality which strikes a blow against uniformity. In the one case creativity appears in the classroom as a highly competitive enterprise, in the other as an overemphasis on triviality, to the detriment of fundamentals. It thus tends to stress those things which separate children. Creativity--which, unlike reading and writing, does have some analogy to a blossoming plant--is the one area Rousseauists seem to select for forcing rather than cultivating. Emphasis on creativity is most often found in affluent schools where education is a veneer and a stimulus rather than a basic necessity, where the possession of power and security can be taken for granted.

The word "freedom" has many meanings, and in pursuing it one needs to be careful not to jump on the wrong bandwagon. The freedom sought by the world's oppressed peoples is one in which all can participate: the freedom to enjoy life in a way best suited to one's talents and disposition, without undue coercion to conform or subjection to penalties for failing to "succeed," and the freedom to enjoy a fair share of the earth's bounty. This is very different from the freedom of the rugged individualist--the freedom to enter into a winner-take-all competition in which the strong gains power over the weak and the aggressive becomes rich at the expense of the unambitious.

Yet this competitive form of freedom is widely accepted by school reformers, who believe like Adam Smith that under this system "All things work together for good." It may be true, as Bertrand Russell says, that "the belief that liberty will ensure moral perfection is a relic of Rousseauism, and would not survive a study of animals and babies,"[16] but it survives and grows in the sentimental soil of upper-class liberalism.

This romanticized idea of individualism has always been strong. Significant opposition can be found in the writings of John Dewey, who observed that the "older individualism has now shrunk to a pecuniary scale and measure," and sought a new individualism consistent with the inherently collective way of life in an industrialized nation. Another voice in opposition was that of DuBois, who talked of sacrifice and cooperation. He realized that, for the poor, the blossoming of individuality must largely await the advent of economic security.

Unfortunately, neither DuBois nor Dewey (reputation notwithstanding) has had

any great influence on American education; the old individualism has always carried the day.

Insofar as the people in the ghetto control their schools, they need to develop a philosophy which is to their own advantage, one which is appropriate to a people striving for equality. This is clearly different from one which is appropriate to a group seeking to defend and extend its present position of privilege. Three areas of concern need to be discussed in more detail as a basis for this new outlook: the search for a philosophy attuned to the present circumstances and future goals of black America: the important question of racial pride: and the importance of wholehearted acceptance of the principle of equality as a basic philosophy for black and poor people to transmit to their children.

Basic Philosophy

The black people of America do not need to be told that education is more important for their children than almost any other thing for their feelings have been made abundantly plain on this score. It is not enough, however, that they have access to school buildings, curricula, and teachers comparable to those of the middle classes. The education of the affluent child continues until his middle twenties, by which time, if he is bright, he is assured a successful career in some profession or business, and if he is dull he is at least guaranteed the advantages of basic literacy and many useful acquaintanceships. The poor child, unless he is exceptionally bright and receives special recognition, will leave school to start work at a much earlier age. If he is to achieve the bare minimum in the way of an education before that time, he needs something more than is offered by the typical public school, because unlike the rich child, he won't be able to take advantage of several semesters of high school catch-up courses in college.

The black community can accept nothing less than good basic education for all their children. To be effective, school methods and principles must be compatible with the home life of the children, representing a continuation, not a denial, of the parents' teaching in the home. The difference in the typical home life of the suburb compared to that in the ghetto makes it impossible to transfer the teaching methods of the affluent suburbs to the ghetto. The suburban schools, at least as the reformers would like to see them, and to a great extent as they actually are, reflect a home life where the parents shower their children with material goods, where the children have the freedom of a whole house, where parents are extremely indulgent and submissive to their children, seeking only to gratify the child's immediate desires, and where children are made to feel no responsibilities. Compare this with the home life in the ghetto, where children have fewer amenities, physical and social; with little room in the apartment, they are often forced on to busy streets to play; they may have to experience cold and darkness, with the compliments of the landlord; and their parents may be quite firm. The education for children in each neighborhood must start from the corresponding home background, building on it, not rejecting it.

Above all, schools in the ghetto should insist on methods which are proven and acceptable for the circumstances in which they are to be used. The affluent liberal suburb is usually the place where the universities and the avant-garde

educationists can find the most ready acceptance of their theories, and also the place where "success" can be most readily achieved in experimental programs. Depending on how rigorously "failure" is defined, almost any method can be declared a success in a school district where success is built in. It is natural that the system claims credit for any apparent success, as if it were due to superior teaching rather than to the inevitability of the social system. The well-to-do classes suffer from the impairment referred to by Tawney: "One of the regrettable, if diverting, effects of extreme inequality is its tendency to weaken the capacity for impartial judgment. It pads the lives of its beneficiaries with a soft down of consideration, while relieving them of the vulgar necessity of justifying their pretensions, and secures that, if they fall, they fall on cushions."[17]

In the last analysis, the essential education demanded of the school by a future banker, a salesman, or even of a lawyer or academic outside the narrow limits of his specialty is trivial. What really counts is his position at the starting line, his contacts, his personality, his aggressiveness, his ruthlessness, his self-confidence--all attributes due more to his home and his parentage than to his teachers.

Particularly persistent in the more liberal middle-class academic circles is an extreme form of Rousseauism in which teachers are not expected to impart ideas or morals to children, and the school system is expected to be judged more by the number of choices it offers students than by what it achieves. Freedom and individualism are all. It is cheerfully assumed, as Bertrand Russell says, that liberty will ensure moral perfection. If anyone doubts the depth of this belief, let him look at any of the large number of television series dealing with high schools or middle-class families in which, week after week, children (and adults), given enough rope, invariably see the light of reason and do the right thing. This is not fiction; it is an acting out of the actual beliefs of most liberal-minded Americans. Of course, what in fact is more likely to happen is described by Russell:

> In a community of children which is left without adult interference there is a tyranny of the stronger, which is likely to be far more brutal than most adult tyranny. If two children of two or three years old are left to play together, they will, after a few fights, discover which is bound to be the victor, and the other will then become a slave. Where the number of children is larger, one or two acquire complete mastery, and the others have far less liberty than they would have if the adults interfered to protect the weaker and less pugnacious.[18]

As Dewey was constrained to remark in regard to this theory, "Such a method is really stupid." Nevertheless, it is widely practiced, and since it leads to a life of relative ease for teachers, especially where classes are small, their opinion as to its success can be expected to be favorable.

In the ghetto there are no cushions, and failure cannot be made to appear as success. Hence the ghetto school needs to be wary of picking up its teaching techniques from the suburban school. This does not mean a rejection of new methods--not at all--but the context is different. In the suburban

schools education is a veneer over the solid basis laid at home in the form of amenities, associations, and the many advantages that money can buy. The schools and colleges are little more than parking places where children are amused and preserved in pristine immaturity until they are past their prime. Their function is to enable children to enjoy privileges already held. The ghetto school has, or should have, a different function, that of equipping a whole class of people with the knowledge and the desire to attain the equal status in society which is their right.

Successful, effective methods are important, but they are more likely to be found in the industrial midlands and north of England, for example, or in the struggling countries of Africa, than in the little corner of the world that caters to the world's leading consumers of material wealth. Methods which give all children, not just the affluent, or the aggressive, or the personable, the education which best suits them and assures them a respected status in the community are not the result of popular nostrums but of talent, hard work, and a deep respect for all children.

Pride of Origin

A community is a group of people who share a common interest. America, being an immigrant country, has consciously followed a practice of indoctrinating the children of immigrants with the lore and the ideals of the United States, weaning them away from their ancestral heritage and raising them as one hundred per cent Americans. The success has been astounding; no culture in the world is as uniform as this.

The black man is in a different boat. He did not come to the United States with his face aglow and stars in his eyes, but in tears and in chains. He was called upon to do the work too menial for the European immigrant, and though he would gladly have been Americanized like the Pole, the Irishman, and the German, he was not asked.

Black people today have suffered so long under bigotry and segregation that its recognition becomes automatic, and good intentions are no longer accepted as evidence of good faith. They are now beginning to see the danger implicit in the doctrine which seeks to absorb the black man into the general American culture in the Judaeo-Christian belief that all men are created in the image of the white man's God, a doctrine which seeks to minimize the differences between the races, leading to such enormities as the suppression of information about sickle-cell anemia. The time is now past when black people will accept absorption into white America; no longer do black boys want to be like John Wayne, or black girls like Doris Day. They need their own heroes, their own history, their own music, dialects, and ancestral home, just like the Irish, the Jews, the Italians, and in this the school must play the major role.

Americanization is for those who willingly come here and are endowed with all the freedoms of citizenship. It has never been appropriate to the black man and never will be until America changes its view of itself. The schools in the ghetto must provide the background--relevant, meaningful his-

tory and culture which give the child a feeling of pride and significance. This does not mean in the slightest that the schools should preach hatred of white people; rather, they should simply provide a sound and healthy basis for association with white people on terms of social equality.

A Passion for Equality

The question of morality, of right and wrong, is a fundamental element of the need for community schools. It is not just the need for more competent teachers or a better curriculum, but also for a different ethos, for the ability of the community to develop a social conscience, for the individual to develop contentment of mind, that gives the community school its importance.

The great moral issue today is equality--equality between individuals, races, and nations. Inequality is on the increase throughout the world, as well as in this country. The most important task of the schools in the poorest areas is to develop a passion for social, political, and economic equality. This is what the community must see as its goal; to achieve it, all members of the community must accept it.

This means rejecting much of the conventional television morality. The American conception of equality remains what it has been since the founding of the republic: equality of opportunity, a distinctly hawkish concept embedded in the rock of the Constitution along with the other doctrines of eighteenth-century liberalism. But as Tawney points out, "A right to the pursuit of happiness is not identical with the right to attain it." He shows the essentially negative character of this concept in the following description of the idea of equality of opportunity:

> It was formulated as a lever to overthrow legal inequality and juristic privilege, and from its infancy it has been presented in negative, rather than positive, terms. It has been interpreted rather as freedom from restraints than as the possession of powers. . . .
>
> "The law is just. It punishes equally the rich and the poor for stealing bread." It is even generous, for it offers opportunities both to those whom the social system permits to seize them and to those whom it does not. In reality, of course, except in a sense which is purely formal, equality of opportunity is not simply a matter of legal equality. Its existence depends, not merely on the absence of disabilities, but on the presence of abilities. It obtains in so far as, and only in so far as, each member of a community, whatever his birth, or occupation, or social position, possesses in fact, and not merely in form, equal changes of using to the full his natural endowments of physique, of character, and of intelligence. In proportion as the capacities of some are sterilized or stunted by their social environment, while those of others are favoured or pampered by it, equality of opportunity becomes a graceful, but attenuated, figment.[19]

The solution to the problem of the unjust status accorded to black people in this country is the same as for all poor and subjugated peoples: the universal acceptance of the principle of actual equality in place of this hypothetical equality. There is no longer any justification for supposing that equality of opportunity alone will do.

> The doctrine which throws all its emphasis on the importance of opening avenues to individual advancement is partial and one-sided. It is right in insisting on the necessity of opening a free career to aspiring talent; it is wrong in suggesting that opportunities to rise, which can, of their very nature, be seized only by the few, are a substitute for a general diffusion of the means of civilization, which are needed by all men, whether they rise or not, and which those who cannot climb the economic ladder, and who sometimes, indeed, do not desire to climb it, may turn to as good account as those who can.[20]

Dewey conceived of equality in social terms:

> Equality denotes the unhampered share which each individual member of the community has in the consequences of associated action. It is equitable because it is measured only by need and capacity to utilize, not by extraneous factors which deprive one in order that another may take and have. . . . Equality does not signify that kind of mathematical or physical equivalence in virtue of which any one element may be substituted for another. It denotes effective regard for whatever is distinctive and unique in each, irrespective of physical and psychological inequalities. It is not a natural possession but is a fruit of the community when its action is directed by its character as a community.[21]

DuBois also conceived of equality in terms of the group:

> The American Negro demands equality--political equality, industrial equality and social equality; and he is never going to rest satisfied with anything less.
>
> Only in a demand and a persistent demand for essential equality in the modern realm of human culture can any people show a real pride of race and a decent self-respect.
>
> The equality in political, industrial and social life which modern men must have in order to live, is not to be confused with sameness. On the contrary, in our case, it is rather insistence upon the right of diversity--upon the right of a human being to be a man even if he does not wear the same cut of vest, the same curl of hair or the same color of skin. Human equality does not even entail, as is sometimes said, absolute equality of opportunity; for

> certainly the natural inequalities of inherent genius and varying gift make this a dubious phase. But there is more and more clearly recognized minimum of opportunity and maximum of freedom to be, to move and to think, which the modern world denies to no being which it recognizes as a real man.[22]

The poor must not only demand equality with the rest of America; they must also require equality within their own group, for just as in the underdeveloped nations to which Myrdal refers, so in the ghettos of America: "Social and economic inequality stand as a main cause of the poverty of a nation. From a planning point of view this means that greater equality is a pre-condition for lifting a society out of poverty."[23]

Within the community, a truly egalitarian ideal will have the effect of unifying and concentrating effort for advancement by mitigating the individualist urge of the exceptionally talented to move up and away and by encouraging group action. In the broader scene, it will develop the kind of pressure for equality on the ruling classes, without which no progress can be made. The privileged classes claim to believe in equality, but they are slow to act: "To become important, the egalitarian ideals need pressure from below. . . . It has never occurred in recorded history that a privileged group, on its own initiative and simply in order to give reality to its ideals, has climbed down from its privileges and opened its monopolies to the unprivileged. The unprivileged have to become conscious of their demands for greater equality and fight for their realization."[24] Education, Dr. DuBois said, is the development of power and ideal. The ideal of equality, firmly implanted in the minds of the children, is power.

A firm commitment to equality will help the children of the coming generation to resist what is likely to be the most serious threat to the advancement of black people, the promotion of the most talented and able members of the black minority into the middle class by the route of job opportunities in large corporations and scholarships to universities. It would not be right to expect that each individual so chosen should refuse the opportunity. It is essential, however, that young people be made to feel that what they achieve as individuals they do also as members of a group, and that the advantages they receive are to be used, not for escape to the suburbs, but as part of the general advancement of the community. Without the development of a strong social conscience superimposed on the characteristic aggressive individualism of white America, the prospect for the ordinary people of the ghetto, those not favored with talents or attributes the world of commerce and industry find advantageous, is bleak indeed. They must come to heed the words of DuBois: "Not by the development of upper classes anxious to exploit the workers, nor by the escape of individual genius into the white world, can we effect the salvation of our group in America."

There has been much discussion lately of the schools in Leicestershire and the West Riding of Yorkshire, in England. It is impossible to understand the significance of these schools without a corresponding understanding of the social struggle which brought them into being. They are among the first fruits of a struggle for equality which has been in progress for many years against a highly resistant system of separate schools based largely on class differences

(a system not dissimilar to the dual system represented by the coexistence in metropolitan Boston of schools such as those in Newton for the well-to-do, close by those in the black ghetto of Roxbury).

Unlike the situation in America, educational reform in England has always been a national political matter. The Leicestershire and Yorkshire schools come as a result of the attack on privilege and inequality on a broad front. They are, in fact, just bridgeheads in a struggle which still has far to go.

With such a background, it is not surprising that the children in these schools are less agressive, more sociable, more content, and have less soaring ambitions than the suburban American child. The typical progressive-minded American teacher reacts unfavorably to politeness and concern on the part of children, calling them dull and docile.

The essential difference is that these British schools have a clear-cut social purpose, whereas American "free schools" in general have none, being based on a philosophy of total individualism. The British schools are therefore much more likely to form models for the ghetto than the American ones. It is a sad commentary on the state of American educational philosophy that few if any American observers are able to notice this cavernous gulf which lies between the curricula and methods of the Leicestershire schools, carried on a stream of liberating equality, and those of the strictly middle-class American "free schools," or "innovative schools," whose function is to raise children to wallow in privilege.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. There Is a Time and Place for Community Schools

Community schools such as those described here have a special role to play in enclaves within and subordinate to a larger community having a different culture. They serve the essential purpose of making education in school harmonious with life in the community. In this sense, the concept has no relevance to the homogeneous suburban school system. In the ghetto, the community school has the further task of aiding in the process of social and economic equalization by helping to give power to the powerless, whether young or old.

2. Some Limitations Are Necessary

Intensive, meaningful parent involvement seems to require that the school be small, serve a very localized neighborhood, and cater only to the lowest grades. Bigness leads to impersonality, austere professionalism, and bureaucracy, and effectively suppresses the casual, personal atmosphere which must prevail if the ordinary parent is to feel welcome. The school should serve a small neighborhood so that the parents form a natural community and all have ready access to the school at any time. The school should serve grades K through 3 (or 4, at most). In addition to putting the necessary curb on size, this limitation also coincides with the age range where children most need and least resent the intrusion of their own parents into their lives during the day, and where the curriculum is such that no parent, however limited his own education, is unable to understand what is going on in school or to work with his own children in school or at home in collaboration with the teacher.

In order to serve a localized community, the site of a school has to take precedence over its architectural splendor. Within the limitations outlined, it is possible to make over a large residential building, such as a three-family apartment house, into a school with reasonable success.

3. Implications for a School System

The schools described would fit very well into a multi-tiered system such as a 4-4-4, or, even better, a 3-3-3-3, system, in which these schools form the lowest tier. At each level the schools would become larger and more specialized, accommodating more pupils, involving parents less intensively, and gradually introducing a greater degree of social and racial mixing. Such a scheme involves a conscious policy of social equalization which is probably not acceptable at this time, although multi-tier schemes with this aim are now working, for example, in West Yorkshire, in England. This is quite a different policy from that of busing children from poor areas into schools in well-to-do areas. The spirit of equality is absent there, for the poor have no control over the schools their children attend.

4. Parent Involvement Must Be Intensive, Not Token

Community schools and parent participation are quite the thing these days. Many rather fanciful claims are made by those who seek to capitalize on their popularity.

The really important thing is not the annual election of officers of the school, or monthly meetings resembling the PTA, but the establishment of an enterprise in which each parent is a part of the school, feels free in it, and carries a share of the burden. The test is not whether the few with superior education, or political bent, or great self-confidence, are obviously involved, but whether all the rest are also involved. It runs counter to the best purpose of the school for it to serve only as a springboard for the few.

5. The Role of the Principal Is Crucial

Becoming involved in education is not something which comes readily to all parents. They need to be encouraged, even coerced, into participating. Ultimately, the task is likely to fall on the principal. Should he choose not to accept the burden, the school may run smoothly, but it will not be a community school. It is therefore essential that a principal be chosen who is firmly committed to the principle of intensive and extensive parent involvement, and who regards the fostering of parent interest and participation as the most important part of his job.

To help ensure this, the parents should have firm control over the school, and the principal should clearly understand that he is there at their pleasure. There must be no tenure, no contracts; the principal must hold his job by becoming known to the people and doing his best to help them. Each parent should be personally acquainted with the principal and staff, and should be able to approach him at any time as they would visit a friend, not a petty bureaucrat.

6. The School Must Be Run on a Strictly Egalitarian Basis

The school must accept all children living in the neighborhood and give each the best education possible. Children must not be expelled or suspended as freely as in suburban schools, because the consequences are much more serious. Children who present special problems must be worked with, and, if they cannot be handled, special help must be sought for them. The school should keep in contact with them; they should never be abandoned.

7. The School Can Also Serve as a Community Center

The building and its facilities can be used to organize and hold meetings to discuss community grievances or to plan community projects. It can serve as a channel of communication between neighborhoods having common problems. The school building can be used as a center for adult education at night or for supplementary education for children; as a place where children

can study if their own home is too cold or too crowded; as a center for counseling, for health services, and so on.

The school can also be used for cultural events and entertainment. It can be used as a nonreligious Sunday school where children can learn of the cultural and spiritual heritage of Africa and Black America, as a complement to their weekday education in public school.

8. The Curriculum Must Emphasize Basics

The poor child has neither the time nor the resources of the rich child, so he must use all the more effectively those which he has. He must learn those skills and acquire that knowledge which will tend to give him a fairer share of the good life and a stronger voice in his own destiny. This means a strong emphasis on the basic tools of civilized society: reading, writing, and critical analysis.

It will almost certainly be found that most parents wholeheartedly support these goals; equally certainly, their achievement depends in part on the active involvement of the parent in his own child's education.

Teachers should encourage independence and creativity, but not to the exclusion of basic education. As Dewey said, "Individuality is inexpugnable;" unlike the unnatural art of reading, all it needs is room to grow.

9. Ghetto Schools Should Include Black and African Culture

The same kind of feelings about his past must be fostered in the black child that white children, particularly poor children of immigrant families from Europe, have. They must learn the truth about the American past as it has affected their parents and their ancestors. It should not be antiwhite, and it should be permeative rather than in the form of separate sessions or pep talks.

10. Moral and Social Values Must Be Taught

To avoid teaching ethics, to pretend that socially desirable values will appear as if by magic, is to avoid one's responsibility as an adult. In particular, the social ideals of democracy, which, in practical terms, mean social and economic equality, must be developed, as well as a sense of having something in common with one's fellow man which makes cooperation a more desirable goal than competition in the areas which vitally affect one's welfare.

The basic problems affecting deprived minorities will only be solved when the structure of society is changed to accommodate them as a group, not one by one, and this will not happen without pressure from below. The schools must develop the sense of justice, of equality, of working together, which will make such pressure possible. Teachers cannot, even if they wish, stand outside of society and its problems:

> The problem is not whether the schools should participate in the production of a future society (since they do anyway) but whether they should do it blindly and irresponsibly or with the maximum possible of courageous intelligence and responsibility.
>
> The problem will be to develop the insight and understanding that will enable the youth who go forth from the schools to take part in the great work of construction and organization that will have to be done, and to equip them with the attitudes and habits of action that will make their understanding and insight practically effective.[25]

As a part of this process, it is necessary to develop a coherent philosophy of education consistent with these social goals. It clearly involves some turning away from the current individualistic ideas of the middle classes and a rejection of the idea that equality of opportunity, by itself, will solve the problem of social injustice. Using the schools to enter more black starters in the race to success, way behind the white starters, will not solve the problem.

11. Avoid Dilettantes

In the ghetto, education is a serious business. To most middle-class educational pundits and would-be innovators, and to many idealistic young people, education is a matter of "finding oneself," a process which seems interminable. These people tend to be immature, irresponsible, superstitious, looking to psychoanalysis, to T-groups, sensitivity training, and suchlike gimmicks to solve social problems. They tend to see problems as being entirely personal and individual, when in fact they are basically social and economic.

When such individuals come to the ghetto to teach, they do so, at least in part, in search of themselves. Their interest in education tends to be related more to their own needs than to the needs of the children and the community. Their interest is likely to be fleeting, for when they do "find themselves," it is liable to be in some other place.

Good intentions are not enough. Real understanding and commitment are also necessary. For this reason, it is desirable to avoid such persons as teachers as far as possible.

12. Look for Teachers with Desirable Attitudes and Goals

Most white middle-class American teachers have values and ideas which are inimical to the best interests of minority groups. Black people who achieve success in American society tend to acquire its values. It therefore becomes very difficult to find teachers well suited to the job. This is a very tough problem.

One possible approach is the use of African teachers, or the training

of American teachers in Africa, or indeed, in any country where the schools are a part of a plan for equality and a better way of life for all.

Another is the use of people retrained for teaching who once held other jobs. Such people are likely to have a deeper understanding of what education means to those who are born without the advantages of position and wealth. They are also more likely to be more realistic in their goals, and ready to make the long-term commitment which is needed. In today's fast-changing economy, the idea of retraining workers for new jobs is going to be heard frequently, and community schools can take advantage of it.

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